

Home Packing Relief Fund Near \$51,000

The Home Packing Company Employees' Relief Fund, now entering its sixth week since the tragic Jan. 2 explosion wrecked the meat processing plant on North First street, totaled \$50,796.55 as of Friday evening.

An aggregate of \$3,500 has been paid out of the fund to date to meet emergencies existing among the families of the 16 men killed, 52 injured and nearly 300 thrown out of work.

Trustees of the fund said \$1,100 was paid out in small amounts this past week, \$1,800 having been given previously, and \$500 placed in an emergency fund to be drawn on in case of drastic situations of hardship.

The committee, composed of members of the processing plant union locals, company officials and, in an advisory capacity, officials of the Family Service Association, which agency is researching all petitions for assistance.

One member of the fund program advised that much of the debris has been cleared away to permit a more thorough insurance investigation to determine the true source of the explosion.

Also, it was reported by the spokesman that another Home Packing building, adjacent to the demolished structure, also suffered wall damage in the concussion that followed the blast.

He quoted a company official as stating it will probably be three weeks yet before an insurance determination can be made, a measure upon which hinges the company's rebuilding decision.

Some of the employees have been successful in securing jobs with other meat packing concerns, one at the Valentine Company, while other have found temporary employment in other fields.

However, more than 200 remain unemployed at this time. Only a few office personnel were said to be working.

The latest list of contributions of \$25 or more are:

Employees of Recipe Foods, 1635 North Thirteenth street, \$78; Recipe Foods, \$52; American Box Company, Fernwood, Miss., \$250; 12 Girl Scout Troops of Neighborhood I, District G, 4220 South Eleventh street, \$25; Marathon Oil Company, Indianapolis, \$100; Vigo County Farmers Union, \$26; McDaniel Freight Lines, Inc., 201 North First street, \$50, and Youngstown Methodist Church, \$40.

Also, United Packinghouse, Food and Allied Workers AFL-CIO, Local Union 117, Indianapolis, \$459; Radio WBOW, Inc., 303 South Sixth street, \$100; Terre Haute Business & Professional Women's Club, \$100; Chili Bill's, 425 North Thirteenth street, \$25, and Terre Haute Lodge 85, Fraternal Order of Police, \$25.

Explosion Wrecks Building, Rocks North Side; 18 Hurt

Four-Block Area Shaken by Blast; Homes Damaged

BY IRV DEVITT

A violent explosion leveled a second-hand store and rocked homes in a four-block area of the city's North Side yesterday afternoon.

Eighteen persons were sent to Union Hospital for treatment, and four were admitted. None was in serious condition. It was the second explosion in three days and the third explosion of the new year.

Frantic mothers rushed from their homes in search of their children who were returning home from nearby Rankin School. An electric clock in one of the wrecked homes stopped at 3:25 o'clock.

POLICE CHIEF Frank Riddle ordered families in a four-block area evacuated while Terre

Residents Near Scene of Blast Evacuate Homes

Thankful that the effects of an explosion that demolished a second-hand store at 1600 Lafayette Avenue about 3:30 o'clock yesterday afternoon were not more serious, neighborhood residents and business operators last night made preparations for another day.

All of the residents in the 3000 block of North Sixteenth Street had to find other lodgings for the night. Most of the windows in the blocks were blown out by the force of the blast.

HARVEY NICKEL, executive director of the Wabash Valley Chapter of the Red Cross, said an emergency headquarters was set up in Rankin School to handle hardship cases. Any assistance needed by persons left homeless could be obtained by contacting the temporary office, he said.

Hundreds of persons left the area to seek lodgings with friends and relatives. Windows were shattered in a four-block area and some complaints were received from homeowners six blocks away.

Force of the explosion was felt by residents as far north as North Terre Haute, police said.

Roy Lamb, 2730 North Thirteenth Street, was working in Dave and Leason's Zephyr Gas Service, 1631 Lafayette Avenue, when he heard the explosion.

"I WAS KNOCKED back against a wall, and three customers in the station were knocked to the floor," Lamb related. "When I looked out, all I could see was bricks and dust flying."

Lamb then drove Jim Powell, operator of Jim's Barber Shop, adjacent to the demolished store; Powell's wife, Rosalie, 28, and the couple's two children, Stanley, 7, and Jean Ann, 6, to Union Hospital. Mrs. Powell was admitted to the hospital, but the others were treated and released.

Calvin L. Sickles, 3018 North Sixteenth Street, was awakened by the sound of the blast. "I jumped up with a mouth full of plaster," Sickles said. He

Vigo Schools Close To Check Heating

Closing of all buildings of the Vigo County School Corporation, including the Administration Building and Adult Education Center today and tomorrow for checking of heating units was authorized last night by the Board of School Trustees.

Custodial staff in the buildings will be on duty but neither children, teachers nor administrative staff will report.

The Emeline Fairbanks Memorial Library and its branches will be open as usual, it was stated.

Parochial schools, including Schulte High School, will not be closed, church officials said.

Haute Gas Company crews shut off all service in the neighborhood.

An eyewitness, Mrs. Betty Stewart, 23 years old, 3030 North Thirteenth and One-half Street, was blown out of her shoes as she walked away from the Swap Shop, 1600 Lafayette Avenue, seconds before the blast destroyed the large frame building.

Mrs. Stewart was admitted to Union Hospital suffering from head and leg injuries. Her condition, however, was not serious.

"I was waiting for my son to come from school," Mrs. Stewart told a reporter, "when I heard a hissing sound coming from the ground across the street. I walked over to the corner of Lafayette Avenue and saw bubbles coming from the ground. As I returned to the other side of the street, I was blown off my feet."

MRS. STEWART crawled to a nearby home and was rushed to the hospital when an ambulance arrived.

Another victim, Mrs. Rosalie Powell, 28, 1608 Lafayette Avenue, was standing at Fifteenth Street and Lafayette Avenue when the explosion blew her into the street. She said she heard a "bubbling sound" coming from the ground just be-

See BLAST
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See RESIDENTS
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(Photo by Charles)

EXTINGUISH BLAZE AT EXPLOSION SCENE—Terre Haute firemen stand guard yesterday afternoon after extinguishing a blaze set off by the explosion at a second-hand store at Sixteenth Street and Lafayette Avenue. The blast rocked the area about 3:30 o'clock yesterday afternoon, leveled Brown's Swap Shop and ripped open a better shop and home in the background. Many houses and buildings in the immediate area were extensively damaged by the explosion. Eighteen persons were injured.



(Photo by Charles)

BLAST RUINS—Assistant Detective Chief Gene Butts, center, and an unidentified man check over the ruins of the explosion at Sixteenth Street and Lafayette Avenue today afternoon. The blast ripped open the wall to a barber shop in background, and crushed the car at right.



(Photo by Charles)

FIRE RAGES NEAR GAS REGULATOR—Firemen at left nearly hidden by flames, battle blaze around gas regulator, while other persons at right examine ruins of the second-hand store for accumulation of gas. Officials discovered a large concentration of gas after yesterday's blast in immediate area of the demolished building and nearby homes and businesses were evacuated. The area was sealed off from traffic in a six block area between Delaware and Fort Harrison Avenues.

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an explosion. She, too, was taken to Union Hospital. She was admitted with abdominal pains, and with a fractured rib, according to Austin, 18, 2406 Jefferson Street, suffering with a bruise on her head when she was struck by falling debris.

Those who were examined included were James Powell, 18, Lafayette Avenue, and children, Stanley, 7, and William, 6, Willard Rodius, 6 North Fourteenth and 1/2 Street; Mrs. Helen S. 3012 North Sixteenth; Sally Bumpus, 3, and her mother, Mary Jo Ann, 5, and Bruce, 8, of 3015 North 1/2 Street.

MIKE KEITH, 9, 3132 Thirteenth Street; Goldie 68, 1801 Lafayette Ave.; Gilbert Aird, 47, 1616 1/2 Avenue; Carol Bart, 18, R. 7; Shirley Cresson, North Sixteenth Street; Mark Haywood, 50, a gas company employee who fell in debris. Keith operates the barber shop adjacent to the demolished building. Mike Keith was in the chair when the blast occurred, while Rodius was waiting for a haircut. Bartley and Miss Austin, visiting Miss Cresson at the time, Mrs. Doan was baby-sitting with the Bumpus children when the blast shook the

ONE WAS in the shop at the time. The owners of open yesterday, neighbors reported. A gas company official, Deloyers, said there was no service to the store, but an underground gas regulator is the demolished building. At this site that detectors had an accumulation of

workers said. They explained that service to the neighborhood was shut off as a precautionary measure. Crews immediately were working each meter and regulator service, he said. When asked if the recent weather could cause a problem in the gas lines, a gas company employee answered that it was "very possible." Work was said in the city they had about 30 inches deep below the freeze line. An-

other crew reported they had dug more than three feet deep on the north side of the city before coming to the freeze line.

LAST NIGHT, business owners in the area were boarding up broken windows. Many homeowners were attempting to shut off water flow through lines ruptured by concussion from the blast.

State police detoured southbound traffic at the intersection of the new bypass of U. S. Highway 41, while city and Civil Defense police routed traffic around the area.

Workers returning home after the morning shift were rerouted along side streets. Cars were jammed along Lafayette Avenue.

Emergency crews restored light and telephone service to the area almost immediately after arriving at the scene. Red Cross and Salvation Army volunteers were in the area providing the homeless and work crews with nourishment.

Meeting Canceled

Jack Roeschlein, vocational agriculture instructor at Honey Creek High School, announced last night that adult farmer classes scheduled for the school tonight have been canceled because of the closing of schools for a check of the heating systems.

Heart Fund

Continued From Page 1

Keith, West Terre Haute; Mrs. H. Ralph Johnson, Prairieville Township; Mrs. Earl Heckelsburg, North Terre Haute; Mrs. Helen Harbaugh, Lewis; Mrs. Dan Earle, Marywood; Mrs. Herbert Kammer, Robinwood; Mrs. William Clark, Woodridge; Mrs. James Williams, Terre Vista; Mrs. Frances Hyde, Sellyville; Mrs. Gary Smith, Honey Creek Township; Mrs. D. B. Strick-

Residents

Continued From Page 1

said his electric clock stopped at 3:25 o'clock.

Gerald Loudermilk, 3108 North Fourteenth and One-half Street, a city policeman, had just returned home from duty when he heard the explosion. "I heard something go 'ka-boom,' and ran outside to see debris flying almost 150 feet in the air."

Loudermilk phoned in the first alarm and ran to the area to help where needed.

LEON CORNES, 2938 North Fourteenth and One-half Street, said he "was lifted off the ground about two feet" when the force hit his home. Windows throughout the house were broken, Cornes added.

At 2641 North Seventeenth Street, Mrs. Amanda Jackson said she came home to find her home all "fore up."

Six-year-old Jimmie Thompson said, "It almost knocked me down." Jimmie and his brother, Gary, 4, were playing in a truck near their home at the time. Their mother, Mrs. Sarah Thompson, 3005 North Sixteenth Street, put the children in the family truck and drove out of the area. She said they probably would stay with relatives until the damage was repaired.

Four blocks away, Mrs. Thomas Carpenter, 2636 North Sixteenth Street, said she was "half scared to death" when she heard the "boom." She ran out and searched for her two children who were returning from school. Plaster was cracked and pictures were knocked from the walls, she said.

Officials said it was too early to determine just how much damage was done. A conservative figure was estimated at \$250,000 by one city official.

Rescue Workers Search Wreckage; Don Scott Missing

A powerful explosion shattered the Home Packing Co. plant, 400 North First street, early Wednesday morning, leaving 15 feared dead and at least 56 injured.

Included among those presumed dead in the rubble is Don Scott, brother of Robert Scott, president of the meat processing firm. One rescue worker said

(Other Pictures and Stories on Pages 2 and 3.)

he spotted Scott's body seated at his desk but that a pile of debris prevented his immediate removal.

According to first-hand accounts of the tragedy, the blast ripped through the two-story brick building a few minutes after 7 a.m. Large sections of the roof and a wall collapsed, piling debris and rubble over the dead and injured workers.

Later, another wall collapsed, sending more debris toppling over the blast area.

Normally, the meat processing plant employs between 200 and 300 persons. The cause of the blast

was not immediately known but speculation ranged from a boiler to ammonia explosion.

At the scene, physicians, still wearing their surgical gowns, were administering first aid to the injured. One man was administered a shot to relieve the pain as he stood in rubble up to his shoulders.

Ten pieces of fire apparatus were dispatched to the scene and firemen, wearing gas masks, helped pick through the debris in search of injured workers. Indiana Air National Guards-

men and Civil Defense volunteers also assisted in clearing away the debris.

Mitchell Kernstein, a worker at the plant, described the blast as "a whirlwind that grabbed hold of me and shook my teeth." Kernstein escaped the building.

Another worker, Glenn Page, reported that the shock of the blast "knocked me off my feet." "It seemed to come from all

directions at once," Page reported.

Richard Brown, 523 South Seventh street, a meat cutter, reported that he was blown about 20 feet from the plant entrance by the force of the blast. Brown said he had just stepped outside when the blast let go.

The force of the explosion at the west side of the building was so intense as to topple a freight car parked on the railroad tracks which run adjacent to the meat processing plant.

At press time, rescue workers speculated that as many as five persons might still be trapped in the basement of the building which is used for meat trimming operations. Several of the men were believed to be pinned in a freezing compartment located in the deepest part of the rubble.

Red Cross workers were at the scene under the direction of Dr. Anna Lee, chairman, Wabash Valley Chapter, American Red Cross. The chapter was providing disaster crew workers, canteen and blood services. A national field representative from Louisville was reported en route to the blast scene.

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Community Affairs File

VIGO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Home Packing

"Some were burned by scalding steam, a lot of them overcome by ammonia," said Charles A. Peters Vigo County sanitation officer.

Rescue workers put on gas masks to work through pockets where ammonia fumes persisted.

Bill Jewell, company engineer discounted reports that the explosion occurred in a boiler or in ammonia gas.

"Ammonia can never cause an explosion like this," he said. "And the boiler is in another part of the building."

He ventured no guess on the cause of the blast.

Source of Blast.

Rescue workers said the blast came from below and raised them—then "everything crumbled."

The explosion cut through the slaughter, cutting, curing and shipping areas and the sales office.

The ammonia is believed to have escaped from ruptured refrigeration lines.

Chief Riddle said, "The mine rescue team deserves a great deal of credit for their work here this morning."

He said authorities hardly knew where to start because of the fact that debris inside was loose and it took men with mining experience to shore up the wreckage to prevent further collapse while rescue workers dug out victims.

City street department equipment, augmented by heavy equipment such as drag lines, cranes, bulldozers and trucks of Haley Brothers, Gibson Coal Co., and Dennis Trucking Co., aided in removal of rubble to expedite the search for victims.

Shocked survivors, some of them appearing to be slightly injured, stood around the damaged plant trying to help rescuers by describing the location of a cooler where they believed many were trapped.

Door Jammed.

James Tidd, Lewis, said he and several others in the plant when the explosion occurred tried to get the cooler door open.

"We were banging on the door — most of the men are in there — but we couldn't open it because the ceiling had caved in behind the door and the debris prevented opening the door."

Jim Walker, an employee, said he was working upstairs in a meat-cutting unit when he heard an explosion that "sounded like someone slammed a big door shut, then the walls collapsed."

Bob Boerner, West Terre Haute, said he "heard an explosion and then the floor caved in and the ceiling came down. Everything went black."

Boerner said he crawled part of the way along a floor and finally reached safety.

Heaps of wood, brick and cement were all that remained of part of the building.

Survivors believed that victims were trapped in and beneath the freezer unit which plunged to the basement from the main floor when the blast occurred.

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA



DONALD W. SCOTT

T.H.T. 1, 3, 6 3

Home Packing Executive Is Blast Victim

Community Affairs File

Funeral services will be held Saturday for Donald W. Scott, 47-year-old Home Packing Company executive, who was among the fatalities in the explosion that wrecked the meat packing plant Wednesday.

Services are to be at 8:30 a.m. at Frank M. Patrick J. Ryan Funeral Home with requiem high mass at 9 a.m. at St. Benedict's Church followed by burial in Calvary cemetery. The rosary will be recited at 7:30 p.m. Friday at the funeral home, where friends may call after 2 p.m. Friday.

Scott, sales manager for the 56-year-old firm, was in his second floor office when the blast occurred and his body was recovered about eight hours later.

He was a member of St. Benedict's Church and treasurer of its Holy Name Society, the Knights of Columbus, Terre Haute Elks Club, Sycamore Club, American Legion and the United Commercial Travelers Club. He was a veteran of World War II.

Surviving are the widow, Mrs. Rita Heine Scott; three sons, James, Greg and Donald Jr., and one daughter, Beth Ann, all at home; his mother, Mrs. D. W. Scott of Fort Worth, Tex.; three brothers, John M. of Fort Worth, Tex.; Paul F. and Robert, president of the firm, both of Terre Haute, and one sister, Miss Amelia Scott of Fort Worth.

Home Packing

Home Packing

Rubble Entombs Workers; Report \$2 Million Loss

7. H. Star, 1. 3. 63
BY IRV DEVITT AND JIM LAMBERT

Twelve bodies had been recovered last night following an explosion which ripped the Home Packing Company plant, 400 North First Street, shortly after 7 o'clock yesterday morning. Four more employees, officials said, were unaccounted for last night and believed to be buried under the tons of twisted steel and bricks. Presumed dead were 16. Fifty-two employees were injured, six of them critically. Most of the injured suffered from

inhalation of deadly ammonia fumes gushing from ruptured refrigeration lines, and some were burned by scalding steam.

About 100 rescue workers had to wear gas masks while digging into the mountain of rubble, reeking with the deadly fumes and swept by the blistering steam.

ACCORDING to hospital records, the first victim was pronounced dead on arrival at 10:40 o'clock, three and one-half hours after rescue operations began.

The twelfth body was removed about 10 o'clock last night, and rescue workers hoped this morning to reach four more bodies believed entombed in a freezer compartment in the basement.

Hours after the explosion, Fire Chief Norm Fesler said the explosion apparently was caused by "some kind of gas."

One of the injured employees, Donald Melcho, 28, 1520 South Fourth Street, from his hospital bed informed The Star that he and several other employees detected a "foul odor like sewer gas" in the basement just minutes before the blast.

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AMONG THOSE found dead was Donald W. Scott, brother of Robert S. Scott, president of the meat processing firm.

Deadly ammonia fumes hindered rescue workers at the plant site. Portable lights and temporary lighting were set up by the Vigo County Civil Defense and Public Service Company as rescue operations continued after dark.

Police said they received the first call at 7:05 o'clock. City and state police, firemen and CD workers were joined by the same mine rescue squads that worked in the Viking Mine explosion that killed 22 miners March 2, 1961.

George Obenchain, secretary-treasurer, said about 200 day workers had just reported for duty when the blast occurred. The plant had been closed for the New Year's holiday.

Normally the plant employs 275 people. Obenchain added. He estimated \$2 million damage to the plant.

REFERENCE
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Community Affairs File

VIGO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

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THE BLAST shattered and collapsed about one-third of the two-story red brick plant, the section from which the processed meats are shipped. The second-floor office crashed through the shipping platforms into a 12-foot basement area used for cold storage.

Digging through the wreckage pile into the basement slowed rescue operations. City Street Department equipment was augmented by cranes, bulldozers, drag lines and trucks of Haley Brothers, Gibson Coal Company and Dennis Trucking Company.

Ten fire-fighting units were dispatched to the scene, and firemen, masked, aided Indiana Air National Guardsmen search through the debris for injured workers.

Police Chief Frank Riddle gave credit to the mine rescue squads for sparking the recovery operation. He said authorities hardly knew where to start because the debris inside was loose, and it took men with mining experience to shore up the wreckage to prevent further

collapse while workers dug out the victims.

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PHYSICIANS, still wearing surgical gowns, were administering first aid to the injured.

Rescued unconscious from the rubble after hours of painstaking digging was a shipping foreman, John T. Fisher, Rosedale. A doctor clambered in close enough to give him three shots of morphine during the long rescue operation.

The force of the explosion at the west side of the building was so great it toppled a freight car parked on the tracks adjacent to the plant.

Ronald Edington of R. R. 1, Rosedale, said there wasn't much noise in the sausage room where he was working. "Machines were flying and walls were falling and I tried to get out through the shipping room but was blocked," he stated. Edington exited the plant through a door on the west side of the building. The sausage room or lunch meat processing room is located on the southeast corner of the main building.

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KENNETH EDINGTON of R. R. 2, Clinton, a cousin of Ronald, reported that he also escaped out the back way from the killing floor. He said steam and ammonia fumes filled the area.

Bob Boerner of 19 North Sixth Street, West Terre Haute, was also working on the killing floor. He reported hearing a dull thud before the floor buckled in front of him. He escaped through a cooler, then was able to get across the killing floor to the back exit.

Gary Webb of R. R. 2, West Terre Haute, was working in the wiener department on the first floor and was knocked straight up in the air by the force. "A cage of bacon fell on me, but I was able to get out through the hole in the south wall," he stated. Webb said Darel Gene Jarred, who died in the blast,

was standing five or six feet from him when struck down by falling wreckage.

A rumbling sound followed by flickering lights which then went out was reported by Clarence Roush of New Goshen. "I was getting ready to go into the wrapping room when plaster knocked me to my knees," he said. Roush was able to get out the back entrance.

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BILL JEWELL, plant engineer, discounted conjecture that ammonia gas or a boiler defect might have caused the explosion.

"Ammonia can never cause an explosion like this, and the boiler is in another part of the building," Jewell explained.

Mayor Ralph Tucker asked the gas utility to shut off gas mains in that section of the city.

Bernard Sweeney, chief investigator for the state fire marshal, reported the gas "at blowing capacity" in sewers around the wrecked plant.

Gas company employees dug through the street and frozen ground to cap the flow from main lines into the plant. Escaping gas could be seen creating bubbles in pools of melted ice along First Street in front of the plant.



BRING OUT INJURED MAN—These clustered workers met success in their desperate efforts yesterday to save those trapped by the early-day Home Packing blast when they reached and brought out an unidentified man. He was among scores rushed to the two city hospitals. *T.H. Star - 1.3.63*



T.H. Star 1.3.62
THEIR TASK IS GRIM—Rescue workers yesterday had the sad task of examining clothing of victims at Home Packing Company to identify the dead and injured. For a time these were the chief clues to the fate of those in the building.

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CROWDS WERE pushed back one block in all directions, and smoking was banned at the rescue site.

Rene Verpleatse, 44, West Terre Haute, a foreman at Lovelace Trucking Company across the street, said, "It just crumbled, likt the bottom fell out of it. Bricks were flying. It didn't make any noise—just fell like an earthquake. I was dumbfounded."

Ray Saulmon, 1619 Liberty Avenue, a dispatcher for the Terre Haute Transit Corporation, was in the company garage just south of the packing plant when the tragedy occurred. He said:

"I didn't hear any explosion—just a sort of rumble. When I went to look out the garage door, the building was down. That was about 7:03 o'clock. I had just looked at the wall clock."

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PATROLMEN Bill Herndon and Carl Belt, the first police dispatched to the scene, said they received the call about 7:05 o'clock and arrived at the scene within three minutes.

"When we saw the seriousness of the situation," the officers reported, "we immediately radioed for ambulances and rescue workers." Both officers still were directing traffic 10 hours later.

William Stokes, 41, who was at work in a meat cutting room on the second floor, said, "There was a blast and we hit the floor. A conveyor table saved the roof from caving in on us completely. I crawled out through a small hole and down the face of the building."

Gabriel Leturgez, 54, who was in the hog slaughter room, said he heard something that sounded like "a gush of wind" and then walked safely down a stairway in an undamaged part of the building.

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JAMES TIDD of Lewis said he and several others in the plant when the explosion occurred tried to get open a cooler door behind which some workers were believed to be trapped.

"We were banging on the door—but we could not even open it because the ceiling had caved in behind the door and debris prevented opening the door."

Jim Walker, another employe, said he was working upstairs in a meat cutting unit when he heard something that "sounded like someone slammed a big door shut, then the walls collapsed."

"I heard an explosion," Bob Boerner, West Terre Haute, said, "and then the floor caved

in and the ceiling came down. Everything went black."

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BOERNER SAID he crawled part of the way along a floor and finally reached safety.

James Bolin, 20, of R. R. 1, West Trree Haute, who was working in the cutting department on the second floor above the main area of the blast, said that he and four other men escaped down a fire ladder which was placed against the blown-out wall.

"I thought it was the end," Bolin said, "the ceiling fell in on us." He reported that he didn't hear much noise, "just a dull thud."

Besides Bolin, Paul Kennedy, Frank Clinton, Bob Shores and Paul Steward scrambled down the fire ladder after it was placed against the remains of the south end of the building.

Shores and Steward were covered with rubble after the blast and were released by the others. Steward was hospitalized with a back injury and was listed in good condition. The other men in the cutting area were unhurt.



T.H. Star 1, 3, 63
VIEWS WRECKAGE — Robert Scott, president of the Home Packing Company where his brother, Don, was among more than a dozen killed yesterday by an explosion, sadly viewed the wreckage of the plant as workers were struggling to reach the last of the dead including Don. Scores of others were injured. T

Photos by Charles

Death List Of Packing Plant Blast

T.H. Star - 1, 3, 63

Biting cold and darkness did not slacken the efforts of rescue workers who continued last night digging through tons of debris in an effort to reach victims of an explosion at Home Packing Company.

Police units roped off the area to keep crowds from hampering the efforts of rescue workers, but anxious, tearful relatives could not be restrained whenever another body was sighted.

Known dead are:

CARL BENDER, 48 years old, R. R. 6, Terre Haute.

LARRY CRUM, 20, 1912 1/2 Locust Street.

JOSEPH DAVITTO, 58, Universal.

ANDREW RUPSKA, 45, 1035 South Tenth Street.

JAMES TROSPER, 33, R. R. 3, Clinton.

DONALD W. SCOTT, 47, 2337 Seabury Avenue.

JOSEPH CALLAHAN, 24, St. Mary-of-the-Woods Village.

HENRY JAMES COTTRELL, 37, R. R. 2, Clinton.

DARL GENE GARRED, 21, 1531 Eighth Avenue.

HOMER ISLE, 57, R. R. 1, West Terre Haute.

JACK RAYMOND HAYES, 30, Shirkville.

JOHN A. JOSEPH SR., 59, 910 Woodlawn Avenue.

LIST OF INJURED

Critically Injured Were:

OSCAR KIPPLE, 70, 1911 South Fifth Street, St. Anthony Hospital.

FRANK JOSEPH, 57, 421 North Fifteenth Street, St. Anthony Hospital.

OLLIE MASSEY, 312 South Fifteenth Street, St. Anthony Hospital.

ERNEST REED, 708 Elm Street, Union Hospital.

CHARLES ROBINSON, 23, 220 Lee Avenue, West Terre Haute, Union Hospital.

JOHN FISHER, 30, R. R. 1, Rosedale, Union Hospital.

Listed in Poor Condition:

LAWRENCE LIFFICK, 60, R. R. 3, West Terre Haute, St. Anthony Hospital.

Listed in Fair Condition in Union Hospital Were:

RONNY RAMSEY, R. R. 1, West Terre Haute.

GEORGE MILLS, 21, 2215 Spruce Street.

JOHN CALLIS, Bridgeton.

JOHN GREEN, 732 North Fifth Street.

ALBERT HAGAN, 447 South Seventeenth Street.

ROBERT M'KEE, 2904 North Fifteenth and One-half Street.

CHARLES GARWOOD, 814 South Sixteenth Street.

JOSEPH ZUMAR, 45, 1614 North Fourth Street.

FRANK SMUTZKI, 59, 500 Chestnut Street.

FRED AKERS, 51, 631 North Eighth Street.

JAMES WALKER, 573 North Thirteenth Street.

GARY WEBB, 22, R. R. 2, West Terre Haute.

Listed in Fair Condition in St. Anthony Hospital Were:

JOHN EVINGER, 43, 4300 South Eighth Street.

GERALD FAGG, 21, R. R. 3, West Terre Haute.

BOB SMITH, 20, Pimento.

FRANK JOVI, 53, 601 Helen Avenue.

Listed in Good Condition in St. Anthony Hospital Were:

PAUL STEWARD, 43, R. R. 3.

EDWARD BLAND, 22, R. R. 6.

HENRY AKERS, 23, R. R. 3, West Terre Haute.

CHARLES BUKES, 53, 2830 South Fifth Street.

DONALD MELCHO, 28, 1520 South Fourth Street.

LARRY SHAKE, 22, 3240 North Thirty-fifth Street.

Treated and released were:

RICHARD SHUMAN, R. R. 3, West Terre Haute.

LINDSEY WALTERS, 2724 Dimmick Street.

BARNIE REVISZ, Clinton.

ROBERT PORTER, R. R. 2, West Terre Haute.

CHARLES WOLFORD, 916 North Fourth Street.

HURLEY EDWARDS, 409 McCullen Street, Paris, Ill.

WAYNE STEWART, 1321 South Seventeenth Street.

WILLIAM SLAVENS.

MARLETT YOUNG.

JOE VALLOSIA, Universal.

AVERY GOSE, Shepardsville.

BOB ROWLEY.

ROBERT SHORES, 425 First Avenue.

THOMAS DAVIS, 1306 North Eighth Street.

MARION WARREN, 25, R. R. 4, Terre Haute.

RICHARD WAGNER, 1425 South Nineteenth Street.

JAMES TIDD, 24, Lewis.

JAMES WEGER, 28, 718 South Twenty-third Street.

MICHAEL GALLAGHER, 26, Jasonville.

FRANK PICKLE, 22.

JAMES HARGIS, 650 North Sixth Street.

Community Affairs File

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Home Packing

Home Packing

FIND ALL 16 DEAD IN BLAST

Community Affairs File

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

T.H. Trib. 1/3/63

Clinton Man Last Victim In Wreckage

Rescue teams continuing their relentless search in the rubble of Home Packing Company Thursday morning finished their job at 11:15 o'clock.

Deep in the ruins of the plant ripped apart Wednesday morning by an explosion, rescue workers found the body of the sixteenth victim of the blast, William Renner, 42, RR 3, Clinton.

Renner's body was discovered very near the spot where 30-year-old John Fisher was finally extricated Wednesday after rescuers worked frantically for hours to free him. But the piles of splintered wood, twisted metal, dirt, meat and ice hid Renner's body.

A fireman, Louis Ambrose, combing the rubble apart from the rest of the disaster crew found the body in one of the four coolers wrecked in the basement area. Early Thursday there was speculation that Renner was not even in the plant, but it was determined that his time card was handled by a foreman other than

the foreman he usually reported to and his presence in the building was confirmed by a fellow worker.

Besides the 16 dead, another 52 were hospitalized with injuries ranging from skull fractures to bruises. Six were still reported in critical condition Thursday. Twenty-two of the injured were treated and released while the others remain for further treatment and examination.

All Accounted For.

It was presumed all searching operations would be terminated since company officials said all employees were accounted for and no further bodies were believed buried in the wreckage.

Discovery of the last victim came 30 hours after the plant exploded in a lethal blast that is the city's worst tragedy since March, 1961, when 22 miners lost their lives in an explosion at Viking Mine.

Bodies of 12 of the victims were recovered from the wreckage before darkness Wednesday and three more were found during the night as firemen, policemen, Civil Defense workers, rescue teams from the Bureau of Mines and heavy equipment experts from local industry continued their grim task under floodlights.

Over 100 persons took part in the rescue operations throughout Wednesday and around 25 volunteers carried on through the night.

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REMOVE BLAST VICTIMS—Police officers and deputy sheriffs carry one of the victims in Wednesday morning's tragedy at the Home Packing Co. to a waiting ambulance while hundreds of residents drawn to the explosion look on at First and Chestnut streets. This scene was repeated dozens of times as the dead and injured were rushed to local hospitals. Photo by Martin.

A crew of 12 wearing gas masks as protection against ammonia fumes picked their way through the two-story deep debris Thursday morning. The crowd of onlookers had dwindled but many plant workers who were not injured in the explosion and others not on duty as well as families of employees watched the operations.

No cause of the tragic explosion has been established but insurance investigators were on the scene ready to start their investigations as soon as the final victim's body was recovered.

One of the team working Thursday morning was reported to have said he saw a hole in the basement area which "appeared to have erupted from below," indicating that the source of the explosion might have been below the basement.

It was hoped that the investigation could get under way by evening. Authorities also said it was possible that the

whole section of the building affected by the explosion would have to be excavated in order to track down the probable cause.

The wrecked building, one-third of it torn off now, was designated by Civil Defense just last month as a fallout shelter.

No Rebuilding Plans.

Surveying the damage where his brother, Don Scott, lost his life, Robert Scott, company president, said Thursday it was "too soon" to make any plans for the future. Until everyone is accounted for, the injured are all cared for, no plans for rebuilding are being discussed. "It's just too soon," Scott repeated.

Efforts will be made immediately to salvage or, as the case may be, dispose of the meats which were ready for shipment or for packaging.

Company officials said Thursday that two teams of company representatives will interview relatives of the deceased employees to determine assistance needed, etc. They said interviewers will visit employees' homes and they asked that families not come to the plant.

The company's office force, headquartered in an adjacent building which was not damaged, was on duty Thursday taking care of routine matters and assisting victims' families. County nurses, members of the Army National Guard, Red Cross disaster personnel and Salvation Army people were

among the volunteer workers who worked on shifts at the site of the tragedy. A white sign reading "No help needed today" still hung on an undamaged corner of the plant.

Teams Work Through Night.

Two and three-man rescue teams spent the night picking their way through the towering rubble. The rescuers, guided by flashlights, wore gas masks to combat deadly ammonia fumes as they probed the debris for the bodies of trapped workers.

Rescue operations were curtailed twice during the night, once when authorities discovered a gas main leak in a street near the shattered plant and again when police feared a heavy pile of rubble might collapse.

Crews of police, firemen, civil defense workers and volunteers engaged in the rescue operation.

The two workers whose bodies were recovered today were Jim Buttrey, 18, and Wallace Hughes, 24, both of Terre Haute. Buttrey was a graduate of Wiley High last June.

Some employees told of how they tried to rescue their co-workers trapped in the refrigeration unit.

"We were banging on the door," said James Tidd, "but we couldn't open it because the ceiling had caved in behind the door and the debris prevented us from opening it."

About 10 o'clock this morning the search team had been through two of the four coolers in the basement where the last victim is believed to be trapped. Mayor Ralph Tucker said the final search was made in an area of approximately 1800 square feet where the other two coolers are. Workers called for more lights and extension cords to reach the spot, he reported, since the possible presence of gas precluded their taking a motor generator.

Plant Total Loss.

One Home Packing official estimated the damage to the plant at \$2 million while another said: "It will be days before we have a damage estimate or know the cause. All we know now is that the plant is a total loss."

About 200 day workers had just reported for work when the explosion rocked the building about 7:05 o'clock Wednesday morning. The plant had been closed for the New Year's holiday.

Ten firefighting units were dispatched to the scene and City Street Department equipment removing the wreckage was augmented by cranes, bulldozers, drag lines and trucks of Dennis Trucking Company, Haley Brothers and Gibson Coal Company.

Streets surrounding the site were blocked off to deter spectators and Civil Defense assisted police officers in directing traffic.

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

List Victims Of Packing Firm Blast

T.H. L. 1, 2, 63

Deadly ammonia fumes hindered rescue workers at the plant site. A team of mine rescue workers equipped with gas masks were rushed to the blast scene to aid in the rescue operations.

An emergency first aid station was set up at the County Highway Garage, Second and Ohio streets, to care for the injured.

Dead are:

Darel Gene Jarred, 21, 1531 Eighth avenue.

Henry James Cottrell, 37, RR 2, Clinton.

Homer Isle, RR 1, 57, West Terre Haute.

Carl Bender, 48, RR 6.

Andrew Rupska, 44, 1035 South Tenth street.

George Kahl (address unknown).

Larry Crum (address unknown).

James Trosper, Clinton.

Seriously injured:

Charles "Bud" Robinson, 23, West Terre Haute.

John Fisher, 30, RR 1, Rosedale.

Included among the injured being treated at Union Hospital were the following:

Richard Shuman, RR 3, West Terre Haute.

Lindsey Walters, 2724 Deming street.

Ronny Ramsey, RR 1, West Terre Haute.

Barney Revesz, Clinton.

George Miller, 2215 Spruce street.

John Callis, Bridgeton.

William Slavens, 312 Kent avenue.

Marlett Young, New Goshen.

Frank Smutzki, 59, 500 Chestnut street.

Wayne Stewart, 1321 South Seventeenth street.

Hurley Edwards, Paris, Ill.

Charles Wolford, 916 North Fourth street.

Robert Porter, RR 2, West Terre Haute.

Ernest Reed, 708 Elm street.

Charles Garwood, 51, 814 South Sixteenth street.

Robert McKee, 2904 North Fifteenth and One-half street.

Albert Hagen, 447 South Seventeenth street.

John Green, 732 North Fifth street.

Ted Puhlman, RR 2, Terre Haute.

Joseph Zumar, 45, 1614 North Fourth street.

Joe Vallosia, Universal.

Avery Gose, Shepardsville.

Bob Rowley, 1606 College avenue.

Fred Akers, 51, 631 North Eighth street.

Robert Showers, 425 425 First avenue.

James Walker, 573 North Thirteenth street.

Admitted to St. Anthony Hospital were:

Lawrence Liffick, 60, West Terre Haute.

Oscar Kipple, 1911 South Fifth street.

Name Packing

John "Bert" Evinger,
4300 South Eighth street.

Edward Bland, 22,
RR 6.

Henry Akers, 23, West
Terre Haute.

Frank Pickell, 22,
West Terre Haute.

Frank Joseph, 57.
no address.

Gerald Fagg, 21, West
Terre Haute.

Ollie Massey, 51.

Paul Steward, 43,
RR 3.

Robert Smith, 20, West

Terre Haute.

Richard Allen, 22.

Frank Jo Vi, 23, 601
Helen avenue.

Michael Gallagher, 26,
Jasonville.

James Weger, 28, 718

South Twenty-third
street.

James Tidd, 24, RR 1.

Charles Bukes, 50,
2830 Fifth street.

Many to Assist Families of Plant Blast Victims

T.H. Star 1, 4, 63
The heart of Terre Haute last night again loomed larger as organizations, private groups and individuals rallied to help the families of those injured in the Home Packing Company explosion.

To aid the families of the dead, Paul Johns, district manager of the Social Security administration here, yesterday said his office was expediting claims for death benefits.

The Home Packing Company Employees Disaster Fund was set up to administer and distribute aid to those in need.

+ + +

MEMBERS OF Local 764 of the International Union of Operating Engineers met at 7 o'clock last night at the St. Joseph School and voted to donate \$450 contained in a bowling fund to aid victims of the disaster. They also pledged \$200 from the general fund of the union.

Local 764 members met during the day with members of Local 381 of the Meatpackers Union and decided to elect trustees for a disaster fund. Matthew Lenges, recording secretary of the operating engineers, said contributions may be sent to Home Packing Employees Disaster Fund, 400 North First Street.

A \$2,000 pledge was received yesterday from the International Packing House Workers Union. \$100 was donated by "a friend" and \$100 was allocated from the treasury of the meatpacker's local. This, with the \$50 pledge from the Vigo County Farm Bureau,

brought the preliminary total to \$2,900.

+ + +

OTHER CIVIC and church organizations are planning to aid the families of workers who were killed and those of the injured men. The Centenary Methodist Church board of trustees met yesterday evening and voted to give next Sunday's collection to a relief fund for the workers.

All trustees of the Home Packing Disaster Fund are employees at the tragedy-stricken plant. Those from Local 381

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Home Packing

11.15.19163

Experts to Comb Debris For Clues

A task force headed by fire and gas explosion experts today probed for the cause of the Home Packing Company plant explosion here that killed 16 men.

"It looks like everything blew from the bottom up and everything caved in," said Norman Fesler, fire chief.

Rescue workers combed the debris of the 54-year-old two-story brick building which had housed the meat packing company for 28 hours before they pulled the last victim from the rubble. Seven of the 52 men injured remained in critical condition at Union and St. Anthony Hospitals.

Fesler said although "there was some talk of an ammonia gas explosion" at the refrigerated plant, "we are discounting it and concentrating on the natural gas angle."

The investigation began late Thursday with officials from

city and state fire departments, police and insurance men wearing gas masks to ward off the still swirling clouds of the deadly ammonia gas.

Robert F. Scott, president of the packing company, indicated the answer will be found in the basement, when the huge amounts of debris and ammonia gas are cleared away.

An expert on gas explosions, Wilbur Walls of the National Fire Life Insurance Co., was expected to arrive here today. John A. Kennedy, explosion expert from Chicago, assisting the fire marshal's investigation Thursday afternoon expressed the opinion that the blast "had all the characteristics of a natural gas explosion".

Bernard Sweeney, chief investigator for the Indiana fire marshal's office, impounded the length of gas pipe, where leaks were first discovered, and sent it to the Indiana State Police laboratories.

Pipe Is Returned.

Later, Attorney Jordan Lewis holding a writ of replevin secured from Justice of the Peace Margaret Kearney's Court, took possession of the piece of gas pipe.

State Fire investigator Sweeney objected to the act and secured a fire marshal's subpoena for an immediate hearing on the matter.

Contacted Friday, Lewis said he returned the pipe to Sweeney

at 8:35 a.m. Friday. Sweeney's wife said he was en route to Indianapolis, presumably on official business.

The company's president, Robert Scott, said reports that a boiler had blown up have proven untrue. He said there was a considerable amount of natural gas escaping in the area. Gas company men have cut off all mains leading into the area.

Scott said, "I imagine it will be a matter of days" before the cause of the blast is determined.

Plant Scene Changes.

The disaster scene took on a much different appearance Friday. The mourners and anxious watchers had all gone home, the last of the 16 victims having been removed shortly around noon Thursday.

Keeping a lone vigil was a guard of the Chancellor Detective Agency. One of the agency's local personnel, Richard Dusenberry, made another trip into the basement of the shattered building Friday to locate a box of time cards.

The box had been blown from the wall, a portion of the exterior damaged and only a few cards spilled out from the

explosion that wrecked such a heavy toll of humanity that also figured in the blast.

Representatives of various groups were seen gathering in the company's administration building, presumably to resume the already instituted investigation for the source of the blast and other information.

Jack Dennis of the Dennis Trucking Company, who stayed on the scene throughout the 28-hour rescue operation, found Friday that leg burns sustained in an old trucking injury had been irritated by the ammonia fumes. Witnesses said Dennis had refused to leave the area as long as any of the victims remained unaccounted for.

Seven Still Critical.

The seven injured still listed in critical condition, and the hospitals in which they are being treated, are:

St. Anthony Hospital—Oscar Kipple, 70, 1911 South Fifth street; Frank Joseph, 57, 421 North Fifteenth street, Ollie Massey, 312 South Fifteenth street, and Lawrence Liffick, 60, RR 3, West Terre Haute.

Union Hospital—Ernest Reed, 708 Elm street; Charles Robinson, 23, 220 Lee avenue, West Terre Haute, and John Fisher, 30, RR 1, Rosedale.

Two more have been released—George Mills, 21, of 2215 Spruce street from Union Hospital and Charles Bukes, 53, of 2830 South Fifth street from St. Anthony Hospital.

Listed as "satisfactory" at St. Anthony Hospital and showing marked improvement, are: John Evinger, 43, 4300 South Eighth street; Gerald Fagg, 21, RR 3, West Terre Haute; Bob Smith, 20, Pimento; Frank Jovi, 53, 601 Helen avenue; Paul Steward, 43, RR 3; Edward Bland, 22, RR 6; Henry Akers, 23, RR 3, West Terre Haute; Donald Melcho, 28, 1520 South Fourth street, and Larry Shake, 22, 3240 North Thirty-fifth street.

In fair condition at Union Hospital are: Ronney Ramsey, RR 1, West Terre Haute; John Callis, Bridgeton; John Green, 732 North Fifth street; Albert Hagan, 447 South Seventeenth street; Robert McKee, 2904 North Fifteenth and One-half street; Charles Garwood, 814 South Sixteenth street; Joseph Zumar, 45, 1614 North Fourth street; Frank Smutzki, 59, 500 Chestnut street; Fred Akers, 51, 631 North Eighth street; James Walker, 573 North Thirteenth street; Gary Webb, 22, RR 2, West Terre Haute, and Ted Pullman, RR 2.

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Community Affairs File

1-H. Disasters T.H. Trib 1/11/63

Disaster Fund Trustees to Assist Emergency Cases

Trustees of the Home Packing Company Employees' Relief Fund Friday moved to meet some of the emergency needs arising among families of those killed or injured in the Jan. 2 meat processing plant explosion by drawing from contributions to the fund which now total \$25,036.05.

Only a few of the stricken families have made requests for

Co-operating in the administration of the fund distribution are Home Packing Company officials Robert Scott Jr. and Warren G. Rockwood.

Check Contributions.

Company personnel, tabulating and recording contributions as they are received, reported that Monday morning receipts totaled \$1,930, making \$25,036.05 when added to Thursday evening's total of \$23,106.05.

Thursday contributions included a \$1,000 check from employees of the local Anaconda Aluminum Company and 1,000 coupons for loaves of bread, donated by the Holsum Baking Company, and 75 pecks of apples, compliments of Trotske Apple House, Fourth and Walnut streets.

Contributions of \$25 or more were received from:

Jim's Highway Market, 1700 North Third street, \$25; Schultz & Co., 400 Wabash avenue, \$250; Meadows Pharmacy, Inc., 13-15 Meadows Center, \$100; Katherine V. McFall, 437 Bluebird drive, \$50; Terre Haute International Brotherhood of Bookbinders Local Union 197, \$50; Charles and Fred Butt, RR 4, Brazil, \$25; Columbia Records, Inc. and employees, 1400 North Fruitridge avenue, \$1,000; Losler and Sons, Eleventh and Ohio streets, \$25; Wiemuth and Son and Co., 1009 Wabash avenue, \$50; Walker Electric Sup-

ply Co., Inc., 126 South Third street, \$200; Joe and Dora Walker, 4627 Wabash avenue, \$25; Sussman Iron and Metal Co., 133 South First street, \$25; J&M Surplus Equipment, Inc., 133 South First street, \$25; Terre Haute Newspaper Guild Local 46, \$50, and Clinton Township Volunteer Fire Department, RR 2, Clinton, \$50.

United Papermakers & Paperworkers, Vigo Local No. 613-B, \$225; Terre Haute Water Works Union Local 13137, \$50; Sugar Creek Township Farm Bureau, \$50; Meat Cutters & Butcher

Workmen Local 119, South Bend, \$50; AMC&BW of NA Local 167, Indianapolis, \$100; UB&C Workers 599, Brazil, \$150; Communications Workers of America Local 5850, \$60; Osco Drug, \$200; Berry's Service Supply Co., Fifteenth and One-half street at Lafayette avenue, \$25; Mr. and Mrs. Richard Harris, RR 1, West Terre Haute, \$100; Visking Recreation Club, Inc., \$425; Kiwanis Club of Greater Terre Haute, \$50, and Local 13136, Dist. 50 UMWA employees of Thomson Symon Co., \$100.

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GRATEFUL WORKERS THANK MAYOR—Mayor Ralph Tucker was visited Thursday by a delegation of Home Packing Company employees, expressing their appreciation for his assistance and concern in the Jan. 2 explosion that wrecked their place of employment, killing 16 of their fellow workers and injuring 52 others. From left, James Buffington, vice president of Meat Cutters Local 381 at Home Packing; Mayor Tucker; Harold L. Shapiro, Charles Bukes, union president, and Wayne J. Stewart, union secretary-treasurer. Bukes, Buffington and Stewart are all trustees of the Home Packing Company Employees' Relief Fund.

Photo by Martin.

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Community Affairs File

Home Packing Disaster Fund Near \$10,000

(Picture on Page 10)

Total cash contributions to the Home Packing Company Employees Relief Fund soared Saturday to nearly \$10,000, the fund's trustees announced.

At the same time, Robert S. Scott, president of the company, announced that every plant employee with at least one year's seniority will receive full vacation benefits for 1963. The estimated amount of the vacation benefits is approximately \$50,000. Checks will be available by the middle of next week.

In announcing the vacation benefits, Scott commented: "All of us in the Home Packing Co. family have suffered a sad and tragic blow. Our hope is that this vacation allowance will not only help in a material way but will give our people in the plant an indication of our feelings toward them."

The fund will be administered by the concern's employees and officials who form a seven-man trustee board.

Gifts should be directed to

Continued on Page 10, Col. 1.

the firm's offices at 400 North First street.

All day Saturday, both cash, clothing and food contributions were being sent to the firm's offices which are located immediately west of the disaster site. Officials of the firm said authorized workers will be at the plant all day Sunday to receive and pick-up donations.

Persons wanting to contribute may call the Home Packing Co. switchboard (C-0161) all day Sunday.

Meanwhile, Bernard Sweeney, chief of the arson division of the state fire marshal's office, indicated Saturday that a team of state investigators probing the cause of the blast are agreed that the Home Packing Company tragedy was caused by a "gas type explosion."

Sweeney reported that his office has given a go ahead for salvage operations at the explosion site beginning Monday. Saturday, the blast area was still roped off and sightseers were kept away from the immediate tangled mass of rubble.

Also touring the blast area Saturday were Terre Haute Fire Chief Norman Fesler and Wilbur Walls, a representative of the National Fire Protection Association. Walls, who flew in to Terre Haute from New York, is considered a top expert in the field of gas type explosions.

Fesler indicated that Walls' findings would be turned over to the state fire marshal's office. Walls declined to make a public statement regarding his findings.

Elsewhere, the list of critically injured workers shrunk to four at the city's two hospitals. Twenty of a total of 52 injured workers remain in a fair condition at the hospitals.

Still listed in a critical condition are Oscar Kipple, 70, 1911 South Fifth street; St. Anthony Hospital; Ernest Reed, 708 Elm street; Charles Robinson, 23, West Terre Haute, and John Fisher, 30, Rosedale, Union Hospital.

Home Packing Disaster Fund

Toledo Scale Co.	\$ 25.00
Square & Marra Const. Co.	250.00
Terre Haute Auto Parts	25.00
Chuck & Iz Gurman	25.00
Int. Union of Operating Engrs No. 764	200.00
Motor Freight Corp.	300.00
Best Way of Indiana	500.00
Eastern Express	500.00
Merchants Freight	350.00
Lovell Truck Service	500.00
Leo W. Bringwald	125.00
McLarin Truck Lines, Inc.	25.00
Graham Grain Co.	100.00
Drake Produce & Trucking	250.00
Indiana Conference of Teamsters	2,300.00
Forrest Sherer Insurance Agency	500.00
Mr. & Mrs. W. G. Rockwood	100.00
Amalgamated Meat Cutters International	2,000.00
Ray Tractor Sales	25.00
Strupp Dental Lab Employees	30.50
Larner Foundation (Indianapolis)	100.00
Allen & Steen Employees	100.00
Packard Shirt Corp.	50.00
Emge Packing Co.	100.00
Home Packing Employees Bowling League	450.00
Newcomers Club	100.00
Total of donations less than \$25.00	133.00
Total Cash Contributions	\$9,163.50

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA



BOOST HOME PACKING DISASTER FUND—Officials of the Terre Haute Motor Carriers and Indiana Conference of Teamsters combined to give \$4,600 to the Home Packing Co. Employee Disaster Relief Fund. Taking part in the ceremony were (from left) Gene Wilson, president, Motor Carriers; William Coakley, recording secretary of Indiana Conference of Teamsters and president of Teamsters Local No. 144, Terre Haute; Don Jeffers of Home Packing Co. and Maynard Niemeyer, president of Lovelace Truck Service. The Carriers contributed \$2,300 and through the efforts of Mr. Coakley and Mr. Norman C. Murrin, Indiana Conference president, and with the permission of remaining Conference officers, an equal amount was given by the Indiana Conference of Teamsters.

Photo by Martin.

Start Disaster Fund to Help Blast Victims

Immediate aid to victims of the Home Packing Company explosion and their families will be forthcoming through an Employees Disaster Fund which was started Thursday.

Help in the form of cash contributions, services and supplies has come from the company, the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America, various agencies, organizations, individuals and churches.

Meanwhile the company has set in motion all machinery which will expedite aid from company and governmental agency sources such as social security, unemployment compensation, insurance matters and such.

Company president Robert Scott, whose brother, Donald Scott, was among the fatalities, and safety director Max Huber are visiting each of the injured victims in the hospital. Scott yesterday announced that plant foremen would visit families of all injured and dead workers to discuss any emergency measures that might need to be taken and explain all forthcoming benefits to which they are entitled.

Red Cross representatives also have been on the job executing disaster services which the agency provides in all community disaster situations.

Paul Johns manager of the local Social Security office, says his office will make every effort to expedite claims for death benefits for families of the 16 fatalities.

Initial gifts to the fund totaled \$2,900 and unstipulated amounts have been pledged. A \$2,000 pledge was received from the Amalgamated Meat Cutters, according to Leo Lafouce, district director, who is here coordinating union efforts in this direction. Lafouce said pledges also have come from locals in Wichita, East St. Louis, Indianapolis and the Indiana State Branch of Butcher Workmen. Many more are expected from other locals in the district which includes six states and Ontario, Canada.

Trustees Named for Fund.

The Employees Disaster Fund is being administered by elected trustees with co-operation from two company officials, Robert Scott Jr., and Warren G. Rockwood, Lafouce pointed out. Trustees, all employees of Home Packing, are Charles Bukes, president of Meat Cut-

ters Local 381; Wayne Stewart, secretary, and James Buffington, vice president, and from Local 764, International Union of Operating Engineers, Don Jeffers, financial secretary, and Matthew Lenges, recording secretary.

Local 381 allocated \$100 to the fund from the union treasury, \$100 came from "a friend," the Vigo County Farm Bureau contributed \$50 and the Operating Engineers local voted to donate \$450 from a bowling fund and another \$200 from the general fund.

Also Fred Wesche's Texaco Service, Terre Haute Meat Cutters Local 398, Lovelace Trucking Company and Drake Produce.

The board of trustees of Centenary Methodist Church voted to give next Sunday's collection to the relief fund and an attorney has offered free legal services.

The management of the Great Scot Super Market announced today that one cent on each dollar of the market's gross sales for one week, starting Monday, Jan. 7—or \$750, whichever is the greater—will be contributed to the relief fund.

Contributions may be sent to Home Packing Employees Disaster Fund, 400 North First street.

In connection with disaster relief, it was pointed out that the Community Blood Program functioned quickly and efficiently. The program, organized as a co-operative community service to provide immediate needs for blood for its Vigo County members, furnished 15 pints of blood to Union Hospital Wednesday for injured explosion victims. Industries co-operated by allowing employees to give blood during working hours to meet the emergency.

This is the first disaster to strike the community since the Community Blood Program was organized. In this first test, officials commented, the program proved its effectiveness and demonstrated its purpose. Over 4,200 citizens are enrolled in the program.

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Trub 1-2-63

RESCUE TEAMS WORK FRANTICALLY TO RESCUE MANY VICTIMS

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T.H. Star 1, 3, 63
HOME PACKING PLANT WRECKAGE LATE YESTERDAY—Here are the grim results of an explosion that early yesterday wrecked a portion of the Home Packing plant here with the loss of an estimated 16 lives and the injury of nearly 60. The blast lifted the structure, letting it collapse in a heap of debris with scores trapped. At first human hands tore the debris aside and later power cranes rushed to the scene took up the removal of masonry and shattered timbers in the hunt for dead and injured.
(Photo by Charles)

Home Packing

TERRE HAUTE TRIBUNE.

Wednesday, Jan. 2, '63



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TRAPPED IN WRECKAGE OF HOME PACKING COMPANY PLANT.

Photo by Bruce.

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Community Affairs File

64 Gas Company Suits Settled

DISASTER
T.H. TRIB 3/2/64
The 64 damage suits, filed against the Terre Haute Gas Corporation as a result of the Jan. 2, 1963 Home Packing Company explosion, have been settled for \$1,653,000, according to a Monday announcement released by Federal Judge Cale J. Holder from his Indianapolis office.

In a telephone conversation with Mrs. Irene Benham, deputy clerk of the U. S. Southern District Court of Terre Haute, Judge Holder stated that all parties have agreed to the compromise settlement total consummated in the court term of last January.

Lloyds of London, insurer of the local gas utility, "has paid the loss, according to the official court statement.

Of the 64 cases filed, 17 were brought as wrongful death actions and 47 for personal injury damages. One was filed in the Terre Haute Federal Court by Mrs. Virginia Reed of Paris, Ill., and all but two of the remaining case were filed in Vigo county or surrounding courts, many of them taken to the latter on changes of venue.

Ready for Trial

The Read case was ready for trial in last January's Federal Court session and had been

placed on the jury trial calendar, prior to being removed for consideration of the proposed compromise settlement. It involved the Feb. 19, 1963, death of Mrs. Reed's husband, Ernest, allegedly as a result of injuries sustained in the explosion.

At that time, all lawyers representing the litigants were invited to confer with Judge Holder to discuss the compromise.

"Many, many conferences and consultations were subsequently held," Judge Holder noted Monday, adding that "many compromises were effected totalling the above given figure."

He explained that final matters pertaining to the settlements are being consummated this week with the filing of petitions in Probate Court in the wrongful death causes.

Commends Parties

He complimented the judgment of all parties involved with: "Litigants are to be commended for their part in bringing the matter to a prompt conclusion for their own benefit as well as the benefit of taxpayers and the saving of money to the local county governments by avoiding the expense of trials and hearings."

Judge Holder did not reveal the size of any of the specific settlements. The settlements averaged nearly \$26,000 per suit.

The flood of damage suits filed had originally asked a total of \$9 million.

While settlement in the personal suits has been completed, Judge Holder added, there still remains litigation between the corporate and insurance interest of Home Packing and Terre Haute Gas concerning property damage and insurance claims of Home Packing which, it is predicted, cannot be compromised.

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Community Affairs File

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Home Packing

Home Packing

V. H. Disasters
T.H. Trib. 6/4/66
**Award \$4 Million
To Home Packing**

BRAZIL, Ind. (Special)—The \$5 million damage suit of the Home Packing Co. vs. the Terre Haute Gas Corp. ended more than two months of trial Friday in Clay Circuit Court with an award of \$4 million to the plaintiff.

The possibility of an appeal by the utility was acknowledged by defense counsel Kenneth C. Miller of Brazil after the jury's verdict at 8:30 p.m., following four hours and 20 minutes of deliberation.

Originally filed in Vigo Superior Court No. 2 and moved to the Clay County court on a change of venue, the trial grew out of an explosion Jan. 2, 1963, at the former site of the meat packing firm. The disaster killed 17 workers, injured 51 and destroyed the plant, ending the Home Packing meat processing operation.

Claimed Negligence

The complaint filed by the packing firm cited six counts of negligence on the part of Terre Haute Gas Corp. in connection with the Jan. 2, 1963, Home Packing Co. explosion that killed 17 workers and injured 51 others.

Included in the charges were failure to inspect for leaks in gas transmission lines, negligence in the installation of gas pipes, negligence in allowing excessive pressure, failure to repair old pipes, negligence in

permitting gas to leak or escape and violation of a 1916 City Ordinance which provides it shall be unlawful to allow gas to leak.

Blame for the explosion was fixed on the utility by the state fire marshal's office. Its report said a gas main leak outside the plant had allowed gas to seep through the ground and accumulate in the plant during the four-day New Year's holiday weekend shutdown.

The main building of the firm was destroyed. Citing losses caused by the explosion, the firm never resumed packing operations.

Defense witnesses claimed ammonia was the true cause of the blast. This was refuted in

testimony by Dr. Rolla Harger, prominent Indianapolis physician, who said the odor of ammonia was distinct and would have been immediately recognized by anyone in the area.

Dr. Harger also testified that a concentration of more than 22 per cent of ammonia is necessary before the mixture is flammable and thereby capable of exploding. Two per cent of ammonia in the air would be sufficient to kill a person, Dr. Harger said.

Many Suits Settled

Sixty-four other damage suits against the gas utility were settled out of court for \$1,653,000 in March of 1964. The suits had asked for combined damages in excess of \$9 million.

Death claims asked ranged from \$40,000 to \$500,000 and injury claims from \$7,500 to \$375,000 in the original suits filed. All but two cases of the 64 were in Vigo County courts or courts of surrounding counties. One case was filed in Federal Court.

Representing the Home Packing Co. has been the firm of Dix, Dix, Patrick, Ratcliffe and Adamson.

Community Affairs File

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Home Packing

T.H. Star 11.3.63

Donald W. Scott, Plant Executive, Dies in Explosion

Donald W. Scott, 47-year-old sales manager of the Home Packing Company, was killed yesterday in the early morning explosion that destroyed the company's local plant.

Scott's body was pulled from the rubble below what had been his second floor office around 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon, nearly eight hours after the disaster occurred. He was reportedly working at his desk just before the explosion.

+ + +

SCOTT BEGAN his business career with the Home Packing Company. As sales manager for the 56-year-old firm he was in charge of a sales area covering three states. He resided with his family at 2337 Seabury Avenue.

Scott was a member of St. Benedict's Church and treasurer of its Holy Name Society, the Knights of Columbus, Terre Haute Elks Club, Sycamore Club, American Legion and the



DONALD W. SCOTT

United Commercial Travelers Club. He was a veteran of World War II.

+ + +

SURVIVING are the widow, Mrs. Rita Heine Scott; three sons, James, Greg and Donald Jr., and one daughter, Beth Ann, all at home; his mother, Mrs. D. W. Scott of Fort Worth, Tex.; three brothers, John M. of Fort Worth, Tex.; Paul F. and Robert, president of the

firm, both of Terre Haute, and one sister, Miss Amelia Scott of Fort Worth.

Arrangements are pending at the Frank M. Patrick J. Ryan Funeral Home.

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Home Packing Relief Fund Near \$51,000

7,471-16-2,3,63

The Home Packing Company Employees' Relief Fund, now entering its sixth week since the tragic Jan. 2 explosion wrecked the meat processing plant on North First street, totaled \$50,796.55 as of Friday evening.

An aggregate of \$3,500 has been paid out of the fund to date to meet emergencies existing among the families of the 16 men killed, 52 injured and nearly 300 thrown out of work.

Trustees of the fund said \$1,100 was paid out in small amounts this past week, \$1,800 having been given previously, and \$500 placed in an emergency fund to be drawn on in case of drastic situations of hardship.

The committee, composed of members of the processing plant union locals, company officials and, in an advisory capacity, officials of the Family Service Association, which agency is researching all petitions for assistance.

One member of the fund program advised that much of the debris has been cleared away to permit a more thorough insurance investigation to determine the true source of the explosion.

Also, it was reported by the spokesman that another Home Packing building, adjacent to the demolished structure, also suffered wall damage in the concussion that followed the blast.

He quoted a company official as stating it will probably be three weeks yet before an insurance determination can be made, a measure upon which hinges the company's rebuilding decision.

Some of the employees have been successful in securing jobs with other meat packing concerns, one at the Valentine Company, while other have found temporary employment in other fields.

However, more than 200 remain unemployed at this time. Only a few office personnel were said to be working.

The latest list of contributions of \$25 or more are:

Employees of Recipe Foods, 1635 North Thirteenth street, \$78; Recipe Foods, \$52; American Box Company, Fernwood, Miss., \$250; 12 Girl Scout Troops of Neighborhood I, District G, 4220 South Eleventh street, \$25; Marathon Oil Company, Indianapolis, \$100; Vigo County Farmers Union, \$25; McDaniel Freight Lines, Inc., 201 North First street, \$50, and Youngstown Methodist Church, \$40.

Also, United Packinghouse, Food and Allied Workers AFL-CIO, Local Union 117, Indianapolis, \$459; Radio WBOW, Inc., 303 South Sixth street, \$100; Terre Haute Business & Professional Women's Club, \$100; Chili Bill's, 425 North Thirteenth street, \$25, and Terre Haute Lodge 85, Fraternal Order of Police, \$25.

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Home Packing

Home Packing



TASK WORKERS FACED—This piled debris was the enemy fought yesterday by firemen, mine rescue crews, police and volunteers as they dug for Home Packing blast victims. With the aid of power cranes the work went on into the night as several presumed dead still were missing. *T. H. Star 1.3.63*

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Home Packing

Dismiss 44 Gas Explosion Suits

F. H. SEAR 4/11/64
Motions to dismiss were filed Monday with Judge Albert R. Owens of Superior Court No. 2 in 44 damage suits against the Terre Haute Gas Corporation, in connection with the Jan. 2, 1963 explosion at Home Packing Company. The motions were granted.

Compromise settlements totaling \$1,653,000 in these and 20 other suits were announced early in March. Death claims asked ranged from \$40,000 to \$500,000 while injury claims ranged from \$7,500 to \$375,000.

No specific awards in the settlements have been revealed. Judge Cale J. Holder of the United States District Court, Southern District of Indiana, conducted many conferences and consultations that resulted in the settlement announced March 2.

Judge Holder noted the savings of money to the local county governments by avoiding the expense of litigation. All but two of the cases seeking damages were filed in Vigo County courts or courts of surrounding counties. One case was filed in Federal Court.

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Home Packing



COORDINATE RELIEF IN DISASTER—These representatives of all groups involved discussed yesterday relief efforts for sufferers from the Home Packing plant explosion here. From left to right, seated: Joe Lowe, Red Cross; James Matthews, United Fund; Dr. Anne Lee, Red Cross; Robert F. Scott, Home Packing Co.; Wayne Stewart, Meat Cutters; Miss Theresa White, Red Cross. Standing: The Rev. William, Brett Council of Churches; Max Huber, Home Packing Co.; John Dinkel, insurance; Paul Johns, Social Security; Don Jeffers, Operating Engineers; John K. Lamb, Chamber of Commerce; Harvey Nickel, Red Cross; Henry Throneburg, Central Labor Council; Ewing Miller, Red Cross, and Ray Thomas, City Controller. *T.H. Star 1.5.63*

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Home Packing Fund Total Still Rising

The "helping hand" from individuals and organizations throughout the local area and elsewhere continued to be very much in evidence in Terre Haute Wednesday as over \$2,300 was received in the morning mail to place the Home Packing Company Employees' Relief Fund at \$34,460.46. The total includes the \$1,000 Quaker Maid gift made but not yet officially delivered to the fund.

The second largest contribution to date, a check for \$2,376 from the management, labor unions and employees of the Terre Haute Weston Paper and Manufacturing Co. and its local Wabash Fibre Box Division, was officially presented to trustees of the fund Tuesday afternoon.

The gift represented \$387 raised by plant employees, \$276 by office employees, \$220 given by Local 1041, United Papermakers and Paperworkers, AFL-CIO at the Wabash Fibre Box plant; \$100 in individual employee donations at Weston's Terre Haute Mill on the Prairieon Road; \$225 by Local 613-B, United Papermakers and Paperworkers AFL-CIO at the Mill, and \$1,188 given by the company to match funds contributed by the five personnel groups.

Benefits Planned.

Meanwhile, benefit plans to raise money for the relief fund continue to grow, the latest announcement disclosing a Saturday morning benefit movie to be held at the Grand Theatre and two HPCERF Benefit Days planned for Monday and Tuesday by the Loop Cab Company.

Proceeds of all taxi runs for the two days will go into the fund, officials of the fund advised, as will proceeds from Saturday's billing of "Snow White and The Three Stooges." The theatre benefit admission prices were announced as 25 cents for children and 75 cents for adults. The theatre will open at 9:30 a.m. with curtain time set for 10 o'clock.

Similarly, contributions of all types of new or used articles in saleable condition are being received at the Terre Haute Armory, 301 North Ninth street, in preparation for a Benefit

Auction to be held Saturday evening.

It will begin at 6 o'clock with all receipts going directly into the relief fund. In conjunction with it, the women of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary will serve a chili supper at the DAV Home, immediately across the street from the Armory. Proceeds from it will also be added to the relief fund.

Persons, businesses, organizations and industries having articles to donate for sale on the auction block are asked to deliver them to the Armory any day through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Those needing additional delivery information or pick-up service may call W-1531 or W-1189. Perishable items may be delivered to the Armory Saturday morning.

Gifts of \$25 or more, as announced in the latest list of contributions, are: employees of the Indiana Bell Telephone Company traffic department, \$75; Terre Haute Christian Reformed Church, 3303 Wallace avenue, \$40.85; Tom Crumley, LaFontaine, Ind., \$25; Emge Packing Company, Anderson branch, \$350; Herm Ermisch Cleaners employees, Sixteenth and poplar streets, \$26; Herm Ermisch Cleaners, \$25; Morris Trucking Corp., 900 East Prospect avenue, \$50, and Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers of America, Local Union 297, Clinton, \$100.

Also, Red Bright Distributing Company, 1200 Sixth avenue, \$100; Meat Cutters Local 350, A.M.C.B.W. of N.A., Gary, \$200; A.M.C.B.W. of N.A., Local 539, Detroit, Mich., \$500; Garfield High School, \$50; Callahan Funeral Home, Twenty-fifth street and Wabash avenue, \$100; Terre Haute Concrete and Supply Corp., Tenth and Chestnut streets, \$100; employees of Ranes-O'Daniel Auto Sales, 1000 Wabash avenue, \$28; employees of General Telephone office, \$50; Quaker Maid employees, \$659.50, and Local Union 14955 of the U.M.W. of A., District 50, at Quaker Maid, \$200 (the latter two being exclusive of the early industry donation).

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Home Packing



(Story on Page 16)

HOME PACKING FUND RECEIVES SECOND LARGEST GIFT—The Weston Paper and Manufacturing Company and employes' check for \$2,376, the second largest contribution to date, was officially presented to the Home Packing Company Employes' Relief Fund Tuesday afternoon. It represents \$1,188 contributed by five groups of company employes, labor unions and officials at the company's Terre Haute Mill on Prairieton Road and the Wabash Fibre Box plant on North Nineteenth street. The total was matched by an \$1,188 gift from the parent corporation. In the presentation group are (from left): Everett Pruitt, Wabash Fibre Box general superintendent; Albert W. Hastings, Wabash Fibre UPP, AFL-CIO Local Union 1041 president; Robert O. Beddow, official of the Home Packing relief fund; Charles O. Campbell, Weston, director of personnel; Vernon Perkins, personnel manager at Weston's, and Russell Allen, local union president at the mill.

Photo by Martin.

Local Agencies Actively Meeting Disaster Needs

T. H. STARR
1/5/63
Representatives of 14 local agencies met yesterday to discuss the immediate and longer-term needs of those affected by the disastrous Home Packing Company explosion of last Wednesday.

Under the auspices of the Red Cross and of the Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce, where the meeting was held,

Home Packing Pay Checks Ready Today

Robert S. Scott, president of the Home Packing Company, announced last night that all employees of the company will receive their full week's pay for the current week despite the disastrous explosion that took 16 lives and injured 52 and disrupted operations.

Prepared on a rush basis under difficulties, the checks will be ready at 3:30 o'clock this afternoon at the company's offices, directly across the street from the damaged plant.

the conference found that the immediate disaster needs have been swiftly met and that response is strong to a fund set up for further assistance.

This will be known as the Home Packing Employees Relief fund. Checks may be made out in this name and mailed to the Home Packing office, 400 North First Street. In addition, those who wish to make gifts to the fund may telephone this office at C-0161 and provision will be made to have the gifts picked up.

THE PACKING company offered all facilities of its office, directly across the street from the damaged plant, to care for the clerical work of the fund, which will be administered by Home Packing employees and officials.

Robert S. Scott, president of the disaster-hit company, with other officials has since the tragedy made personal visits to funeral homes, hospitals and residences of those sharing loss from the fatal explosion. Joining him in the visits was Max Huber, personal director, and other officials.

Representing the company at yesterday's relief conference

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Relief

Continued From Page 1

was Robert F. Scott, vice president of the company, and Huber.

Ewing Miller, speaking for the Red Cross, opened the meeting and he and Miss Theresa White, Red Cross field representative, explained the disaster relief already given by the Red Cross.

MISS WHITE reported that seven service men have been brought home on emergency leave through efforts of the Red Cross. She said three families so far have asked additional assistance.

Others at the meeting explained that help from insurance under the employees credit union, unemployment insurance and workmen's compensation, Social Security and other sources will be or already is forthcoming.

The employees' relief fund, already at the \$3,000 mark, gained strong assistance when the Terre Haute Motor Carriers through William Hawkins of Eastern Express announced it would give \$2,300. This sum will be matched by the Teamsters Union, it was announced by William Coakley, recording secretary of the local Teamsters, and Norman Murrin, president of the Indiana Conference of Teamsters. Thus \$4,600 will be added.

An early gift to the fund was \$2,000 from the Amalgamated Meat Cutters. This was announced by Leo Lafouce, district director, who said other areas also will help.

ASSISTING THE trustees of the fund are Robert F. Scott and Warren G. Rockwood of the company. The elected trustees, all Home Packing employees, are Charles Bukes, president of the Meat Cutters Local 381; Wayne Stewart, secretary, and James Buffington, vice president, and Don Jeffers, financial secretary and Matthew Lenges, recording secretary of the Operating Engineers, Local 764.

An early gift to the fund was \$450 from the employees' bowling fund. Local 381 gave \$100; \$100 was given by "a friend;" \$50 came from the Vigo County Farm Bureau and \$200 from the Operating Engineers.

A total of \$750 or more will come to the fund from the Great Scot Super Market, which announced that one cent on each dollar's gross sales for one week starting Monday, Jan. 7 will be donated. This will be for the total percentage or \$750, whichever is greater.

Other gifts have come from Fred Wesche's Texaco Service, Meat Cutters Local 398, Lovelace Trucking company and Drake Produce.

The disaster response "proves we are a responsible community," Miller told the meeting. He spoke not only as a Red Cross member but also as chairman of the Industrial Committee of the Chamber of Commerce.

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

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IN THE ROUND-TABLE discussion Paul Johns of the district Social Security office urged bereaved families whom his office has been unable to reach to contact the office as soon as possible to expedite their claims for death benefits and dependents' allotments.

Don Jeffers of the Operating Engineers discussed the administration of the relief fund and said it would be on an individual basis.

John K. Lamb, executive president of the C. of C., offered all possible assistance from this agency and commended the Red Cross and other agencies for their prompt action in recent days.

It was emphasized that funds used by the Red Cross and resulting in the free gift of aid to families affected by the disaster come from the donations made to the United Fund during the drive here.

James Mathews of United Fund pointed out that other U. F. agencies likely to give future help are Family Service and the Visiting Nurse Association.

Dr. Anne Lee, chapter chairman of Red Cross, said volunteers have called on the families to offer immediate aid and in particular assistance in applying for various benefits to which they are entitled.

Home Packing

T.H. Disasters
T.H. TMB 1/5/63

Continue Probe Of Tragic Blast

Representatives of the state fire marshal's office and other investigators Saturday continued an official probe into the circumstances and events leading up to Wednesday's tragic explosion at the Home Packing Co., 400 North First street, which took the lives of 16 persons and injured 52 workers.

Investigators at both the state and local level Saturday revisited the scene of the disaster in a continuing search for clues which might lead them to the cause of the explosion. The initial investigation centered around a 37-inch length of gas pipe which was removed from the ground near the center of the blast late Wednesday night.

Heading the state probe is Bernard Sweeney, chief of the arson division of the state fire marshal's office. Sweeney, together with Lt. Charles Davis, head of the Indiana state police laboratory and experts from the Board of Health and Bureau of Mines, labor division, are conducting and will continue tests under the direction of the state fire marshal.

Sweeney said they will conduct such tests as the technicians deem necessary under the personal supervision of Lieutenant Davis.

Sweeney said last night, "I feel it is the duty and function of the Indiana state fire marshal's office to insure that those families of victims, who are unable to hire professional experts, at least can find out how their fathers or brothers died. They are entitled to know."

Tests Are Planned.

Tests to determine the amount of gas still in the area and if pockets exist are being made, Sweeney continued. "We

still have the responsibility to make sure that no hazard exists," he said.

Funeral services for many of the 16 victims were held Saturday. A double funeral ceremony for two who had been close friends since childhood were held at St. Mary's Village Catholic Church.

Leroy Kahl, brother of Dave Kahl whose body was found near the refrigerator in the basement area, said that Joe Callahan, who also was killed, and his brother had been playmates since they were five or six years old. "They always did things together such as camping out and taking hunting trips when they were older," Leroy Kahl said. "They were always together — Joe lived next door to us."

Both young men were to have been married in 1963 and their fiancées had received instruction in the Catholic faith in preparation for the ceremonies. Dave Kahl had given his prospective bride, Carol Chiodo, an engagement ring at Christmas. The dates for the weddings had not been definitely set, but both would have been married this year in separate ceremonies.

After the double funeral both Callahan and Kahl, lifelong friends, were buried side by side in Calvary Cemetery. Joe was 23, Dave was 21.

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Community Affairs File

Home Packing



REPRESENTATIVES of various civic, government and labor groups held an emergency meeting Friday to speed relief efforts for victims and their families hit by the Home Packing Co. explosion early Wednesday. Among those attending the session were Rev. William Brett, Council of Churches; Dr. Anne Lee, Red Cross; Miss Theresa White, Red Cross; Ewing Miller, Red Cross; Ray Thomas,

city controller, and Henry Thornburg, Central Labor Council; standing, from left, Max Huber, Home Packing Co.; John Dinkel, insurance; James Matthews, United Fund; Paul Johns, Social Security; Robert S. Scott, Home Packing Co.; Don Jeffers, Operating Engineers; Harvey Nickel, Red Cross; Joe Lowe, Red Cross; Wayne Stewart, Meat Cutters, and John K. Lamb, Chamber of Commerce.

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Trustees Announce Disaster Fund Plan

How the Home Packing Employees Disaster Fund will be administered was explained yesterday by the trustees in a press conference at the Chamber of Commerce.

Benefiting from the fund will be the widows and children of those killed in the explosion Jan. 2, those maimed in the disaster and those affected by it as far as current employment is concerned.

Applications for assistance will be received by the trustees and referred to the Family Service Association for investigation. The F. S. A. then will recommend to the trustees what action it feels should be taken.

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ALL OF THIS work, it was pointed out by the trustees, will be on a volunteer basis and as an extra duty of the F. S. A. Other agencies of the United Fund also will be called upon for volunteer contributions, it was noted, as the need arises.

The conference yesterday followed a special meeting of Local 381 of the Amalgamated

Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America, at which it was reported, Robert F. Scott, vice president of Home Packing in charge of production, talked to the men concerning rebuilding of the plant.

He was not at that time, he was reported as saying, able to make any commitment but that the company was investigating every possibility of rebuilding.

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THE STATEMENT made by Don Jeffers, chairman of the trustees of the Disaster Fund, read:

"First, I'd like to take this opportunity on behalf of the trustees to express our thanks and appreciation to the community for the wonderful response we have received to the Disaster Fund.

"It's at a time like this that we, all of us, realize the warmth and humanity of the people of this community.

"The shock and the horror has begun to wear off, but the very human problems that the disaster has left in its wake will be with us for a long time.

"We are determined, with the help of the public, to alleviate to the extent possible, the terrible hardships which now exist.

+ + +

THE CONTRIBUTIONS to the fund to date (4:30 P. M.) have totaled \$15,760.70.

"This is an excellent beginning, and we are very optimistic that the generosity and concern of the public will swell this amount many times over.

"I think it should be clearly understood that the fund cannot be used indiscriminately, but must be administered in such a manner as to do the most good for those seriously in need. Every cent will be strictly accounted for and will

be distributed on the basis of need only.

"We wish to encourage the employees to make full use of those public agencies, such as Red Cross, which has already given some emergency disaster relief. The trustees view this matter in a long term perspective and continuing need for many will be felt for a long time.

"Keith Cook, who represents the Family Service Association, will play a vital role in determining this need.

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"THE TRUSTEES and the personnel office of the Home Packing Company will refer applicants to the Family Service. They will process the applicants and make their recommendations to the trustees. We will then act upon Mr. Cook's recommendations."

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

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Home Packing

He then turned the conference over to Cook, after introducing the other trustees, James Buffington, Charles Bukes, Wayne Stewart and Matthew Lenges; Harold L. Shapiro, international representative of the union from Detroit, who was present; Cook and James Mathews, executive director of the United Fund.

Administration of the fund will be over considerations on

a long-term basis, it was emphasized.

Keith Cook, executive director of the F. S. A., pointed out that most of the emergency needs had been cared for by the Red Cross and the long-term planning now would be handled by the F. S. A. with the confidence of the trustees. Work will be done by retired social workers and F. S. A. staff members on a volunteer basis, he said, with the aid of a typist and dictating equipment provided by the Home Packing Company.

THE FUND will be used solely for disaster victims and their families. He noted that already some emotional disturbances in families affected have become rather serious and must be treated.

Requests for assistance will be screened by the F. S. A. and then recommendations made to the trustees. However, the trustees noted, recommendations may not always be followed. The trustees will meet daily at 8:30 A. M. to consider applications and recommendations. Also, some funds will be available to Cook for emergencies presented.

There are 62 children in the families of the dead and injured, it was pointed out.

Persons in the city or county who would like to donate any staple foods, such as canned goods or grocery items, may take them to the Harrison Township assessor's office in the Court House. Herman "Lefty" Compton or his chief deputy, Mrs. Peg Dreiman, will accept them.

To aid those wishing to give such items and who have no way to take their gifts to the Court House, they may call the office of Sheriff Herbert Beasley and the sheriff's deputies will pick it up; also, any employe of Home Packing or widow of an employe who wishes to go to the F. S. A., 912 Chestnut Street, and has no transportation may call the sheriff and arrangements will be made to take them to the office and return them to their homes.

MAYOR Ralph Tucker yesterday paid personal tribute to all persons, firms, organizations and others who at the time of disaster through their actions proved "beyond any doubt that Terre Haute is a city that cares."

"Our community's response in this time of great personal tragedy is a touching tribute to the excellent caliber of our citizens. From all walks of life, our people have expressed themselves in a most fitting manner," the mayor continued.

"I am extremely proud of each and every individual who responded so magnificently," Tucker concluded.

The mayor listed many who aided, adding that he knew he had missed many. Those he named are:

Gilbert Leonard and Civil Defense organizations, rescue teams from coal mines, the Air Reserve, the National Guard, Square and Marra Construction Company, Dennis Trucking Company, Haley Brothers, General Telephone Company, Public Service Company, Terre Haute Water Works Corpora-

tion, railroads, Hoosier Heating Company, Terre Haute Furnace Company, Hazeldine, Inc.; Marine Recruiting Unit, the undertaking establishments, Ambulance Service, Rose Polytechnic Institute, County Highway, Terre Haute Tent and Awning, the doctors and nurses, the Salvation Army, the Red Cross, St. Anthony and Union Hospitals.

FATHER George Powers, pastor of St. Leonard's Church, West Terre Haute, announced a special collection will be taken up at all masses Sunday for the Home Packing Employes Relief Fund. More than 30 members of the parish had been employed at Home Packing and 15 were working there at the time of the explosion, but only one was injured.

Meanwhile, contributions continued to come in. Following are names of contributors of \$25 or more:

Greenwood Baptist Church, Harding and Greenwood, \$125; Indiana Terminal and Refrigerating Corporation, Indianapolis, \$50; Hall's Auto Parts; Shelburn, \$25; Hulman Field Technicians, Federal Credit Union, R. R. 5, \$50; J. C. Penney Company employes, Meadows Center, \$100; Hoosier Auto Parts, Inc., 124-130 North Second Street, \$25; Donald L. Struble, 2 West Lawrin Boulevard, \$50; Burr Niswonger Company, 405-411 South Thirteenth Street, and the Vigo County National Farm Organization, \$100.

ALSO, MODERN Aluminum Casting Company, Inc., 1351 Eighth Avenue, \$50; Hornung Hahn, Meadows Center, \$25; Mrs. Cecilia G. Meissel, 2417 North Eleventh Street, \$25; ABC Class, Montrose Methodist Church, \$25; Hillman Jewelers, Inc., 612 Wabash Avenue, \$50; Felstein & Co. (Geo. I. and Allan Felstein), 612 Wabash Avenue, \$50; Mr. and Mrs. Ben Blumberg, 4003 Hulman Street, \$50; Terre Haute Typographical Union No. 76, \$100; Church of Christ, 1900 South Fifth Street, \$100; Church of Christ, North Fourteenth Street and Fifth Avenue, \$100; Henry and Marion Kiewit, 723 North Fourteenth

Street, \$25; Corner Furniture Store, 518 Wabash Avenue, \$25; a Friend, \$250; Smiley's Jiffy Car Wash, 27 North Second Street, \$50; Lough Bros. Roofing and Siding Company, Seventh and Spruce streets, \$115, and Valentine Company, Inc., \$700.

Also, John Casserotti, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, \$25; Rosenfeld Brothers, Inc., 320 Wabash Avenue, \$25; Xi Alpha Mu (Beta Sigma Phi), \$25; Potter Electrical Engineering and Construction Company, 122 South Tenth and One-half Street, \$50; Vigo County Farm Bureau, Inc., 2500 South Thirteenth Street, \$50, and Pierson Township Lions Club, Farmersburg, \$25.

Home Packing

More Groups Aid Disaster Relief Fund

T.H. Trib.

1/23/43

The Home Packing Company Employees' Relief Fund was increased to \$45,775.07 Wednesday by \$1,037.89 reported in the latest list of contributors.

The bulk of the latest added sum represents the \$606.82 Sunday worship donation of the First Evangelical United Brethren Church congregation at

Other contributions of \$25 or more included in the list are: Steak 'n Shake Restaurants and Henri's Restaurant, 3631 Wabash avenue, \$25; Derby Hill Truck Stop, RR 1, West Terre, \$25; Estella L. Donnelly, \$100; Carney Tire Company, 1600 Wabash avenue, \$125; Terre Haute Alumnae Association of Chi Omega Sorority, \$35; Christ Lutheran Church, 2331 Poplar street, \$37.07, and Union Christian Church, RR 5, Terre Haute, \$50.

Trustees of the fund and company officials have advised that receipt acknowledgment and sincere thanks communications will be mailed to each contributor.

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Home Packing

T.H. DISSETT IS
T.H. TRIB. 2/8/63

Suits Filed For Victims In Explosion

A total of \$1 million in damages is sought from the Terre Haute Gas Corporation by the estates of three victims of the Home Packing Company explosion in suits filed Tuesday in Superior Court No. 2.

The complaints, each of which requests a jury trial, named plaintiffs to be Mrs. Rita R. Scott, administratrix of the estate of Donald W. Scott; Mrs. Marilyn B. Trosper, administratrix of the estate of James Trosper Jr., and Mrs. Dorothy Ruth Reners, administratrix of the estate of William Howard Reners.

Each Man Killed.

Each of the men was killed in the explosion. Mrs. Scott, the mother of four children, asks \$400,000 damages; Mrs. Trosper, the mother of three children, asks \$300,000 damages, and Mrs. Reners, also the mother of three children, seeks \$300,000 damages.

Each suit asserts that the defendant gas corporation "negligently permitted its said gas to escape from its said pipes, and on Jan. 2, 1963, said gas exploded, thereby causing the collapse of said Home Packing Company, Inc., buildings. As defendants, gas pipes and the said contents thereof were within the exclusive control of defendant, plaintiff does not know by what act or acts of negligence the defendant allowed or permitted said gas to escape."

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Inquiry Continues In Plant Explosion

T.H. Star 1,5,63
Investigation to determine the cause of Wednesday's explosion at the Home Packing Company which claimed 16 lives and injured 52 workers continued yesterday and no indication has been given by officials of the state fire marshal's office when tests on a section of gas pipe under study will be completed.

At Indianapolis State Police laboratory facilities are being used to examine the 37-inch length of gas pipe taken from the ground near the Home Packing Company. Attorney Jordan Lewis had taken the pipe from a state trooper with a writ of replevin, but appeared under subpoena at the state fire marshal's office hearing at midnight Thursday and agreed to relinquish the pipe.

LEWIS SURRENDERED the pipe at 8 o'clock yesterday morning and State Troopers Paul Stewart and Lloyd Heck took the length of pipe to the laboratory.

The pipe had been first found Wednesday night and was impounded by Bernard Sweeney, chief of the arson division of the state fire marshal's office.

Lt. Charles Davis, head of the Indiana state police laboratory together with experts from the Board of Health and Bureau of Mines, labor division, are conducting and will continue tests under the direction of the state fire marshal.

SWEENEY SAID they will conduct such tests as the technicians deem necessary under the

personal supervision of Lieutenant Davis.

Sweeney said last night, "I feel it is the duty and function of the Indiana state fire marshal's office to insure that those families of victims, who are unable to hire professional experts, at least can find out how their fathers or brothers died. They are entitled to know."

Tests to determine the amount of gas still in the area and if pockets exist are being made, Sweeney continued. "We still have the responsibility to make sure that no hazard exists," he said.

FUNERAL SERVICES for many of the 16 victims are to be held today. A double funeral ceremony for two who had been close friends since childhood will be conducted today at St. Mary's Village Catholic Church.

Leroy Kahl, brother of Dave Kahl whose body was found near the refrigerator in the basement area, said that Joe Callahan, who also was killed, and his brother had been playmates since they were five or six years old. "They always did things together such as camping out and taking hunting trips when they were older," Dave Kahl said. "They were always together — Joe lived next door to us."

Both young men were to have been married in 1963 and their fiancées had received instruction in the Catholic faith in preparation for the ceremonies. Dave Kahl had given his

See BLAST
On Page 2, Column 1

prospective bride, Carol Chiodo, an engagement ring at Christmas. The dates for the weddings had not been definitely set, but both would have been married this year in separate ceremonies.

After the double funeral both Joe Callahan and Dave Kahl, lifelong friends, will be buried side by side in Calvary Cemetery. Joe was 23, Dave was 21.

FOURTEEN agencies which are involved in the relief program for families of the victims met yesterday afternoon at the Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce office to plan and coordinate the aid to stricken families. Contributions to the fund will be picked up by a representative of the relief agency for donors who call the switchboard number at Home Packing Company, C-0161.

And as agencies work toward the goal of helping those most affected, investigators are still delving into the cause of the explosion.

the disaster-stricken company, said yesterday that reports of a blown boiler were untrue. He stated that a considerable amount of natural gas escaped into the area after the blast and gas company workers cut off all mains leading into the area. "I imagine it will be a matter of days before the cause of the explosion is determined," he concluded.

THE HECTIC scene at the site of the explosion when men were still trapped, changed after the recovery of the last victim Thursday morning, into a bustle of fire and explosion experts and of investigators analyzing the area. A guard of the Chancellor Detective Agency maintained a lone vigil last night after investigators recovered sections of gas line and had inspected the site.

Richard Dusenberry, an employee of the agency, made a trip into the basement of the building and located a box of time cards amid the debris.

Only a few cards had spilled from the box which had been blown from the wall thus bury-

ing the immediate record of the men who were within at the time of the explosion.

SEVEN MEN were still listed in critical condition at the hospitals last night. At St. Anthony Hospital in critical condition were Oscar Kipple, 70 years old, 1911 South Fifth Street; Frank Joseph, 57, 421 North Fifteenth Street; Ollie Massey, 312 South Fifteenth Street, and Lawrence Liffick, 60, R. R. 3, West Terre Haute.

At Union Hospital were Ernest Reed of 708 Elm Street; Charles Robinson, 23, 220 Lee Avenue, West Terre Haute, and John Fisher 30, R. R. 1, Rosedale, who also remained in critical condition. Twenty remained in fair condition at the hospitals.

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Home Packing

Home Packing



ONE OF THE LUCKY ONES—Gerold Fagg, 21 years old, R. R. 3, West Terre Haute, is shown yesterday in his St. Anthony Hospital room after he escaped serious injury in Wednesday's explosion which claimed 16 lives at the Home Packing Company, 400 North First Street. Student Nurse Marian Kocher adjusts a bandage on Fagg's broken finger. Fagg said he escaped from the debris by grabbing the leg of a person above him and holding on until rescue workers reached him. (A. P. Wirephoto) *T.H. Star 1, 4, 63*

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7. H. T. b 1. 2. 3
FIREMAN OVERCOME BY GAS FUMES is helped out of the wreckage by other members of the Terre Haute Fire Department. Police Chief Frank Riddle (in light coat, center) and members of the Police Department also aided in rescue work. During the rescue operation several firemen were overcome by refrigeration gas fumes. After recovery they rejoined rescue work. Photos by Martin.

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BLAST DEAD

CARL BENDER, 48 years old, RR 6, Terre Haute.

LARRY CRUM, 20, 1912½ Locust Street.

JOSEPH DAVITTO, 58, Universal.

ANDREW RUPSKA, 45, 1035 South Tenth Street.

JAMES TROSPER, 33, RR 3, Clinton.

DONALD W. SCOTT, 47, 2337 Seabury Avenue.

JOSEPH CALLAHAN, 24, St. Mary-of-the-Woods Village.

HENRY JAMES COTTRELL, 37, R. R. 2, Clinton.

DARL GENE GARRED, 21, 1531 Eighth Avenue.

HOMER ISLE, 57, RR 1, West Terre Haute.

JACK RAYMOND HAYES, 30, Shirkyville.

JOHN A. JOSEPH SR., 59, 910 Woodlawn Avenue.

DAVID KAHL, 19, St. Mary of the Woods Village.

JIM BUTTREY, 18, 1301 South 11½ street.

WALLACE HUGHES, 25, 2801 South First Street.

BLAST INJURED

Critically Injured Were:

OSCAR KIPPLE, 70, 1911 South Fifth Street, St. Anthony Hospital.

FRANK JOSEPH, 57, 421 North Fifteenth Street, St. Anthony Hospital.

OLLIE MASSEY, 312 South Fifteenth Street, St. Anthony Hospital.

ERNEST REED, 708 Elm Street, Union Hospital.

CHARLES ROBINSON, 23, 220 Lee Avenue, West Terre Haute, Union Hospital.

JOHN FISHER, 30, R. R. 1, Rosedale, Union Hospital.

Listed in Poor Condition:

LAWRENCE LIFFICK, 60, R. R. 3, West Terre Haute, St. Anthony Hospital.

Listed in Fair Condition in Union Hospital Were:

RONNY RAMSEY, RR 1, West Terre Haute.

GEORGE MILLS, 21, 2215 Spruce street.

JOHN CALLIS, Bridgeton.

JOHN GREEN, 732 North Fifth street.

ALBERT HAGAN, 447 South Seventeenth street.

ROBERT McKEE, 2904 North Fifteenth and One-half street.

CHARLES GARWOOD, 814

South Sixteenth street.

JOSEPH ZUMAR, 45, 1614 North Fourth street.

FRANK SMUTZKI, 59, 500 Chestnut street.

FRED AKERS, 51, 631 North Eighth street.

JAMES WALKER, 573 North Thirteenth street.

GARY WEBB, 22, RR 2, West Terre Haute.

Listed in Fair Condition in St. Anthony Hospital Were:

JOHN EVINGER, 43, 4300 South Eighth street.

GERALD FAGG, 21, RR 3, West Terre Haute.

BOB SMITH, 20, Pimento.

FRANK JOVI, 53, 601 Helen avenue.

Listed in Good Condition in St. Anthony Hospital Were:

PAUL STEWARD, 43, RR 3.

EDWARD BLAND, 22, RR 6.

HENRY AKERS, 23, RR 3, West Terre Haute.

CHARLES BUKES, 53, 2830 South Fifth street.

DONALD MELCHO, 28, 1520 South Fourth street.

LARRY SHAKE, 22, 3240 North Thirty-fifth street.

Treated and Released Were:

RICHARD SHUMAN, RR 3, West Terre Haute.

LINDSEY WALTERS, 2724 Dimmick street.

BARNIE REVISZ, Clinton.

ROBERT PORTER, RR 2, West Terre Haute.

CHARLES WOLFORD, 916 North Fourth street.

HURLEY EDWARDS, 409 McCullen street, Paris, Ill.

WAYNE STEWART, 1321 South Seventeenth street.

WILLIAM SLAVENS.

MARLETT YOUNG.

JOE VALLOSIA, Universal.

AVERY GOSE, Shepardsville.

BOB ROWLEY.

ROBERT SHORES, 425 First avenue.

THOMAS DAVIS, 1306 North Eighth street.

MARION WARREN, 25, RR 4, Terre Haute.

RICHARD WAGNER, 1425 South Nineteenth street.

JAMES TIDD, 24, Lewis.

JAMES WEGGER, 28, 718 South Twenty-third street.

MICHAEL GALLAGHER, 26, Jasonville.

FRANK PICKLE, 22.

JAMES HARGIS, 650 North Sixth street.

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Community Affairs For

Home Packing



AID FOR BURIED VICTIM—Dr. W. L. Loewenstein (at right), one of several physicians at the scene of the explosion at Home Packing Company Wednesday morning, pictured as he was lowered into the basement of the wrecked plant to administer to a worker buried waste deep in the rubble. It was several hours before the seriously injured man could be released.

T.H. Trib 1.2.63

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Officials Open Plant Blast Probe

T.H. Star 1.4.63
**Fire Marshal Seeks
Pipe Section Taken
On Replevin Writ
From State Trooper**

Investigators last night focused their attention on the cause of the tragic blast at Home Packing Company after the body of the sixteenth victim was recovered from beneath tons of rubble shortly before noon yesterday.

The chief investigator for the fire marshal's office, Bernard Sweeney, last night sought the recovery of a 37-inch length of gas pipe which he had impounded yesterday for investigation as a possible cause of the blast.

Sweeney said that gas utility officials yesterday had agreed to allow the fire marshal's office to examine the pipe with the help of Indiana State Police technicians in Indianapolis today.

BUT LAST NIGHT an attorney, Jordan Lewis, had a writ of replevin issued for recovery of the pipe from a state trooper who was to relay the evidence to Indianapolis.

Irate, Sweeney last night issued a fire marshal's subpoena for an immediate hearing in the matter. He said also he would seek a warrant today for the arrest of Lewis for interfering with an official investigation.

The pipe section allegedly was one which contained a large crack.

Sweeney said that because as late as 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon gas leaks in explosive amounts were detected in the neighborhood of the blast, his concern was to determine if the ruptured length of removed pipe caused the blast, or if other danger existed in the area.

The final victim, William H. Reners, 42 years old, R. R. 3, Clinton, was found in the ruins of cooler units in the debris-filled basement, 30 hours after an explosion ripped across the south end of the plant, leaving one corner of the two-story red brick building standing.

IRA ANDERSON, state fire marshal, said his department would continue to probe the cause of the explosion in the hope that a solution would prevent a similar tragedy.

Other bodies that were recovered during the night-long rescue operation were those of James Buttrey, 18, and Wallace Hughes, 25, both of Terre Haute, and George D. Kahl, 21, St. Mary-of-the-Woods Village.

With all the workers accounted for, rescuers stopped at noon

and insurance investigators started their probes.

A GAS LEAK was detected Wednesday night while rescue workers dug through the mountain of rubble searching for the bodies.

Mayor Ralph Tucker had asked the gas utility to shut off the gas mains in that section and blocked off the area to viewers.

An explosion expert from Chicago, John A. Kennedy, assisting yesterday in the fire marshal's investigation, said the blast "had all the characteristics of a natural gas explosion."

Besides the 16 dead, 52 persons were injured in the blast. A company official estimated 200 employees had reported for work just minutes before the tragedy. The plant had been closed since last Friday for the New Year's holiday.

SIX EMPLOYEES remained in serious condition last night. However, hospital attendants said each was showing signs of improvement. The seriously injured are Oscar Kipple, 70, 1911 South Fifth Street; Frank Joseph, 57, 421 North Fifteenth Street; Ollie Massey, 312 South Fifteenth Street; Ernest Reed, 708 Elm Street; Charles Robinson, 23, 220 Lee Avenue; John Fischer, 30, R. R. 1, Rosedale, and Lawrence Liffick, 60, R. R. 3, West Terre Haute.

In total, 35 employees remained hospitalized last night.

Bodies of 12 of the victims were recovered by Wednesday night, and rescue teams, aided by emergency lighting, dug out three more bodies during the early hours of yesterday morning.

A fireman, Louis Ambrose, discovered Reners' body very near the spot where 30-year-old John Fisher, R. R. 1, Rosedale, was rescued after being buried up to his chest in debris.

About 10 o'clock yesterday

morning the search teams had been through two of the four coolers in the basement where earlier it was believed Reners had been working when the explosion occurred.

SURVEYING the damage yesterday, Robert S. Scott, president of Home Packing, said it was too soon to make plans for the future. He added that no plans will be made until all the injured are cared for.

Scott's brother, Donald W. Scott, was one of the persons found dead in the wreckage.

Company officials yesterday said two teams of company representatives will interview relatives of the deceased employees to determine what assistance is needed. They said the interviewers will visit the relatives' homes and asked that the families not come to the plant.

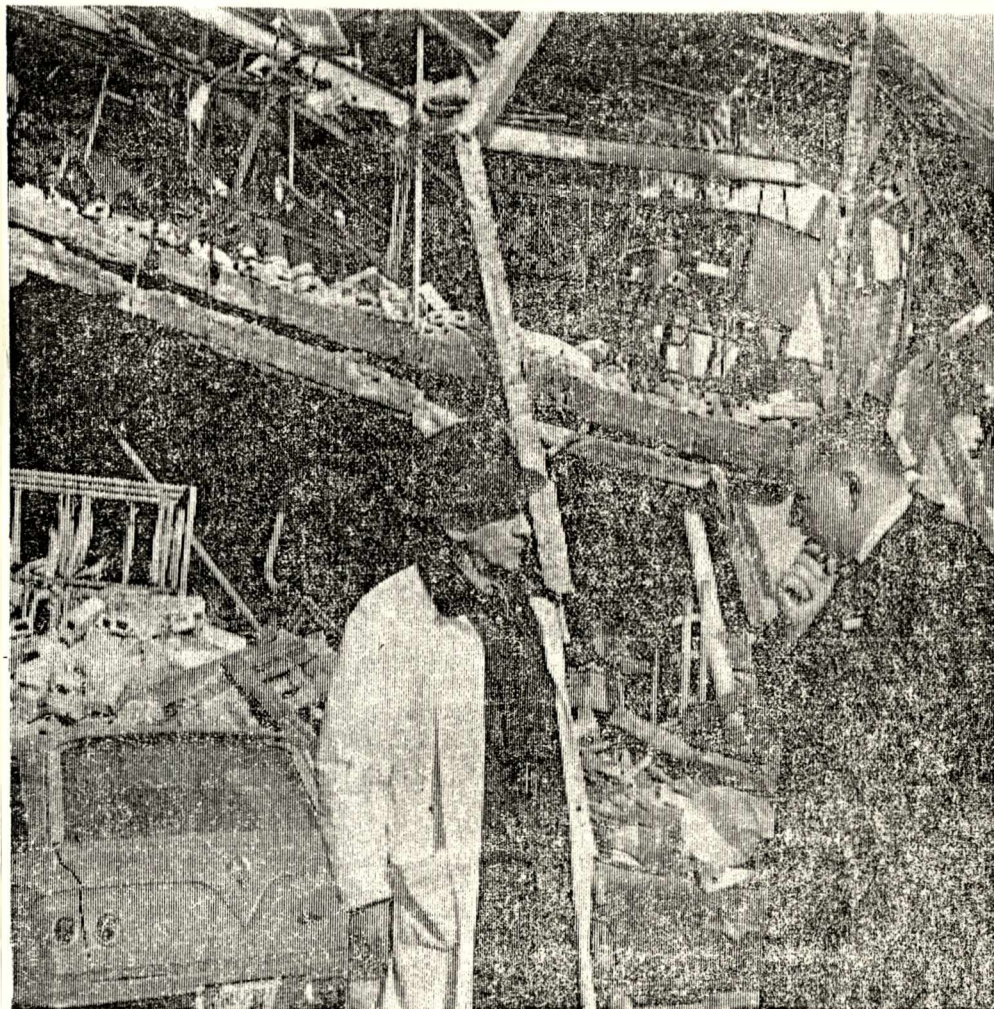
On duty yesterday was the company's office force, headquartered in an adjacent building that had not been damaged by the blast. They were taking care of routine matters and assisting families of the victims.

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Home Packing



(Photo by Charles)

J. H. Star 1, 4, 63
DISCUSS PACKING PLANT'S BLAST—Warren G. Rockwood, vice president of Home Packing Company, left, yesterday discussed fatal explosion with Congressman Richard L. Roudebush, Republican, Sixth District, who came here from his home in Noblesville before his return to Washington, D. C. Roudebush, who before his public career was a livestock buyer, is personally acquainted with many of the local packing plant people.

Home Packing



ONE OF THE INJURED being hoisted from the depths of the blast wreckage by crane. Many of the injured were strapped to litters before being removed.

Photo by Martin.

T. H. Trib 1 2 63

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Explosion Victim Tells of Tragedy

J.H. Trib 1.2.63

By MARIAN PERRY

"How far up did I go? Well, I tell you I remember saying 'Please, God, let me live,' about five times before I landed. That's how far up."

This was Henry Akers who was working in the cutting room on the second floor at Home Packing when an explosion ripped the building. Akers was talking from his hospital cart in the emergency room at St. Anthony's Hospital where 17 of the injured workers were treated.

The halls by the emergency rooms were filled with people, but it was quiet. As victims of the blast were brought in from ambulances, doctors, nurses, orderlies, moved swiftly, noiselessly. The emergency tables were lined up neatly in the hall awaiting, an attendant was on duty at the outside door to speed up things, others were

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Victim Tells Of Tragedy

Continued From Page One.

directing ambulance personnel to the proper receiving rooms.

Families of the injured streamed through the big double doors, hovered quietly for word of their loved ones. For the majority the word was encouraging. Of the 17 admitted by mid-morning, only two were in serious condition after the first examination. Injuries included possible skull fractures, broken bones, internal injuries and lacerations and bruises, but all the men suffered distress from ammonia inhalation. (Ammonia fumes were so intense in the ambulance entrance lobby when the bodies of the dead were brought in later, that gas masks available at the hospital were donned by the nurses and fans were quickly set up to stir up the air. A call to the Army National Guard brought more gas masks to the hospital.)

Akers, 23, R 3, West Terre Haute, continued his account. "I heard this big noise and I felt myself going up in the air. I wondered where 'Dutch,' the fellow next to me, was and I prayed. Then I started coming down and landed on something. It was between the first and second floors and something was on top of me. Guess that was good because it protected me from all that stuff that was falling. I started climbing out, then got some help. I was really lucky."

Edward Bland, 23, RR 6, was outside the plant. "I was walking along the south side of the building when I heard the explosion. I started running and bricks fell all over, knocking me down. I heard guys hollering for help and I couldn't do anything. It was awful. The sides of the building gave in, then all of it seemed to blow up."

Three of the injured were treated and released, and others were admitted to the hospital, some for X-ray and further examination.

The corridors emptied except for a few—some relatives, police officers, newsmen, firemen—and the long wait for word of the dead began. Hospital authorities were notified to expect around nine bodies and the temporary morgue was readied.

One observer at the explosion scene who had helped extricate some of the trapped men said it would take hours and hours more before rescuers could reach some of the victims.

Home Packing

**FEAR 15 KILLED; 56 INJURED
IN HOME PACKING CO. BLAST**

San Francisco Tribune 1, 2, 63

Home Packing



SCENE AT HOME PACKING COMPANY MADE MINUTES AFTER TRAGIC BLAST RIPPED THROUGH PLANT THIS MORNING